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MRS. CROSBY,

Long Sutton,

LINCOLNSHIRE.



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Oliver



Drawn & Engraved by R.L. Wright.

SLEAFORD CHURCH.

Published by J. Creasey, Sleaford, 1825.

HISTORY OF THE
HOLY TRINITY GUILD,

AT SLEAFORD, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF ITS

*Miracle Plays, Religious Mysteries,
And Shows,*

AS PRACTISED IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY,

And an Introduction

DELINEATING THE CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE LOCALITIES OF
HEATH AND FEN, CASTLE AND MANSION, CONVENT AND HALL, WITHIN
THE DISTRICT ABOUT SLEAFORD SINCE THAT PERIOD.

TO WHICH IS ADDED AN APPENDIX, DETAILING THE TRADITIONS WHICH
STILL PREVAIL, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE LINCOLN PAGEANTS,
EXHIBITED DURING THE VISIT OF KING JAMES TO THAT CITY.

THE WHOLE ILLUSTRATED BY COPIOUS NOTES,

CRITICAL, HISTORICAL, AND EXPLANATORY,

BY THE REV. G. OLIVER, D.D. M.A.S.E.

VICAR OF SCOPWICK, INCUMBENT OF THE
COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF WOLVERHAMPTON, DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD KENSINGTON.

LINCOLN:

PRINTED BY EDWARD BELL DRURY, GAZETTE OFFICE.

MDCCCXXXVII.

ROYAL PRINCE GUARD

THE PRINCE GUARD

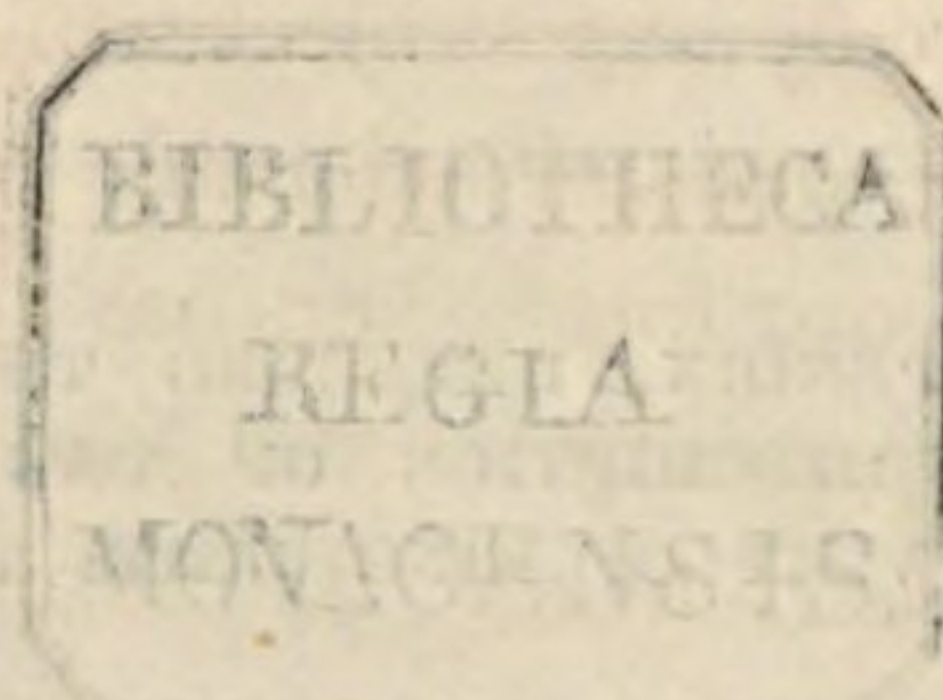
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DEDICATION.

TO CHARLES CHAPLIN, ESQ.,

OF BLANKNEY HALL, LINCOLNSHIRE.

MY DEAR SIR,

In the present extension of Literary Knowledge there is scarcely any subject which has not received illustration from the able pens of scientific men. The occupations and amusements of our forefathers have ever been esteemed interesting objects of enquiry; and amongst these, their attachment to dramatic exhibitions, as indentified equally with civil and religious ordinances, has engaged a proportionate share of public attention. Fitz Stephen, a writer of the 12th century, thus expresses himself:—"London, instead of common interludes belonging to the theatre, has plays of a more holy subject; representations of those miracles which the holy confessours wrought, or of the sufferings wherein the glorious constancy of the martyrs did appear." Since the abolition of these sacred performances, at the Reformation, Dugdale has attempted to describe them in his history of Warwickshire, where he asserts that, "the yearly confluence of people to see them at Coventry, was extraordinary great, and yielded no small advantage to the city." Drake says the same thing of the Corpus Christi Plays at York, for which he assigns this reason, that "they were the most extraordinary entertainments the city

could exhibit." Hearne, Warton, Omerod, Brand, Sharpe, and other learned writers, have enlarged, from the capacious stores in the British Museum and elsewhere, on the popularity of these exhibitions, as they were enacted at Coventry, Chester, York, Newcastle, and other places in England; but the series remained incomplete while the mysteries performed at Sleaford, under the superintendence of the "Brethren of the Trinity," were unrecorded. To supply this deficiency is the principal intention of the present work; during the progress of which I have often had occasion to regret that, at the feverish period of the Reformation, when these exhibitions were banished from the church and from the realm, by the well-known proclamation of Bonner to his clergy; the change could not be accomplished without the demolition of those sacred appendages to divine worship which can never be replaced. In the unhappy reign of Charles I. the cry of "No Popery" was again revived, and the frenzy of the people being roused to the highest degree of excitement, they clamourously demanded the removal of all remaining "vestiges of idolatry," and a bill passed the house, August 26, 1643, empowering certain commissioners to proceed through the country for the purpose of removing all images, pictures, and relics of idolatry, from places of public worship. Armed with this authority, the bigots broke down crosses and statues; demolished painted windows; violated tombs, altars, and shrines; carried off the gold, silver, and brass work with which they were inlaid; and subjected the holy fabrics themselves to insult and desecration.

But the destruction of ancient monuments is confined to no particular age; and you will lament, with me, the melancholy dilapidations which are observable, not only in our ecclesiastical edifices, but in other remains of "olden time" throughout the County of Lincoln. During the past year, as I am informed, two venerable structures, of great antiquity, in the form of gigantic mounds, which have been the admiration

of ages, and bid defiance to the efforts of time, have sunk before the progress of agricultural improvement. To balance against this public loss, the same number of ancient relics have been recently restored in the neighbourhood of Sleaford. I refer to the foundations of the Preceptory of Temple Bruer, an edifice which fell a sacrifice to the mistaken zeal of our early reformers, and the Drake Stone at Anwick. The former has been accomplished by a considerable sacrifice of time and money; for which the gratitude of the Antiquary is due to you, Sir, as the friend of science; and I am proud of the opportunity of placing so honorable a fact on permanent record.

To your patronage I commit this little work, in which, amongst many other interesting subjects, the recent excavations at Temple Bruer are minutely detailed.

And subscribe myself, dear Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

GEO. OLIVER, D.D.

P R E F A C E .

In ushering this little work into the world, I cannot but express my regret that there should be no direct provincial vehicle for the record of those interesting topographical and antiquarian peculiarities, which exist in such abundance within this great and influential county.

I despair of seeing the Antiquities of Lincolnshire become the subject of deliberate investigation in a copious historical work ; for it would demand a greater extent of patronage than, I am afraid, the county would be willing to produce ; and, therefore, I have endeavoured to place on record, in the present form a portion of the antiquities and traditions, which abound in the north and east parts of Kesteven, as adjuncts to such a history, should we ever have the good fortune to witness its completion ; and I embrace this method of announcing, for the information of any future antiquary, who may be desirous of investigating the works of our remote forefathers within the county, (now rapidly passing away) that I have made copious collections towards illustrating the wapentakes of Yarborough, Bradley, Haverstowe, and Walshcroft, in Lindsey.—Langoe, Flaxwell, and Aswardhurn, in the parts of Kesteven ; and almost the entire division of Holland.

I beg to express my thanks to the Rev. Richard Yerburgh, D.D., Vicar of Sleaford, for the loan of his valuable manuscripts, which I have occasionally used without any particular acknow-

ledgement. In other respects, I am not aware, in the numerous quotations with which I have endeavoured to elucidate my subject, that a single line has been inserted without its appropriate authority. Several engravings from Dr. Yerburgh's History of Sleaford have been introduced by way of illustration; for the loan of which my acknowledgements are due to Mr. Creasy, whose property they are.

On the whole, it will be found, that I have amply redeemed my pledge in the prospectus, by the construction of a work which may be perused with interest, not only by the scholar and the antiquary, but by those also who derive no amusement from the dry details of topographical discussion.

NORTH STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON,

Nov. 11, 1835.

judgement. In other respects I am not aware in the numerous quotations with which I have endeavoured to elucidate my subject, that a single line has been inserted without its appropriate authority. Several cognates from the Edinburgh History of Scotland have been introduced by way of illustration; for the loan of which my acknowledgements are due to Mr. Cressy, whose property they are.

On the whole it will be found, that I have amply redeemed my pledge in the prospectus, by the completion of a work which may be perused with interest, not only by the scholar and the antiquary, but by those also who derive no amusement from the dry details of topographical discussion.

NORTH STREET, GLASGOW.

Nov. 11, 1835.

CHAP. 1.

INTRODUCTION.

The periodical changes which have been successively introduced into the manners and customs, language, dress and agriculture of England, have been so important in their nature and extent, as to invest every age of the British monarchy with a character peculiarly its own. In small market towns local changes frequently remain unrecorded; and customs rise,—flourish their brief period,—and are abolished, without leaving any trace behind as a memorial of their existence. The few unpublished documents which relate to the obsolete customs of the town of Sleaford, are so imperfect and insecure, that in another age, every paper may have arrived at its final destination in the cabinet of the antiquary; and the next remove may produce annihilation. I esteem myself fortunate in having been able to secure a few relics of forgotten ages before they were consigned to a perpetual oblivion.

The traditions which were prevalent amongst the primitive and single-hearted inhabitants of the district round Sleaford, while they tended their flocks of sheep, geese, or rabbits, in these wild and solitary regions, are also fast receding to the “tomb of the Capulets;” and if the present generation fail to produce an historian who will busy himself to secure the fleeting legends, they will soon entirely vanish before the intellectual superiority of the age; though they have been transmitted from father to son for many centuries. These traditions are exceedingly valuable, and it would be a public loss should they become extinct; for they serve to illustrate the singular monuments and conformations of the soil to which they usually refer; and which exist throughout the whole of Lincolnshire

in the shape of stones erect, gigantic mounds of earth, trenches and embankments, where the primitive inhabitants sought shelter and protection when invaded by hostile force; caverns, and other vestigiæ which are generally considered to be of British or Roman origin.

Nor can any one estimate the value which may be derived from the transmission of those fluctuating appearances which mark the scenes that lie before us.

The place where our boyish days were spent is peculiarly dear; but on returning to that spot, consecrated by our earliest prepossessions, after the absence of half a life, how many changes may be counted? The infant plantation, which fancy had so often painted as the scene of truant wanderings in search of game, or to rifle the linnet's nest of its eggs or young, has assumed the character of a shady grove; roads have been altered; full-grown trees removed, and their places supplied by others in new and strange situations;—inclosures have been accomplished, and the localities have undergone so many transformations, that the scene is no longer the same, and we regard with a sigh, the place of our nativity as aliens and strangers.

These changes, both in customs and scenery, it is useful to record: and they are much more striking than a casual view would indicate. For instance, without plunging into a high antiquity for examples to illustrate the proposition, the Lincolnshire of 1836 is totally different from the same county in 1780. Heath, wold and fen have been brought into efficient cultivation since the latter period, by inclosure and drainages;—the face of the country has assumed a new and improved appearance; and its state when the fens were deluged with water; the wolds barren and uncultivated; and the heath overrun with rabbits, will be entirely forgotten, should the race, now verging into the extreme of life, who were the occupiers of these vast tracts of land, in their primitive and unprofitable state, be “gathered to their fathers,” without leaving behind them a record to transmit the results of their experience to posterity.¹

¹ It is a trait of character which had not expired in the middle of the last century, that the lower classes pertinaciously retained the custom of converting most of the old festivals into a holiday. Thus William Hall, the Kyme water poet, who was born about that period, says—“I perfectly remember, old Mr. Anthony Peacock, uncle to the late Anthony Peacock, Esq. threatening to horsewhip Frank Pears, the tailor, because he would not go to mend the great mill (Engiven) sailcloths on old Christmas day.”

he present age, it is scarcely known by the same class of people when old Christmas day arrives.

We are indeed possessed of a few notitiæ which describe the state of these wilds at different periods of time, and it is impossible for any person, how indifferent soever he may be to the charms of topographical inquiry, to peruse them without interest. In the twelfth century "this fennie countrie was passing rich and plenteous, yea, and beautiful to behold; watered with many rivers running down to it; garnished with a number of meers both great and small, which abound in fish and fowl; and *it is firmly adorned with woods and islands.*"² In 1178, the old sea bank broke, and the whole fen was deluged by the sea.³ The injury however appears to have been speedily repaired, for twenty years afterwards, according to Malmsbury,⁴ "the fens were a very paradise, and seemed a heaven for the delight and beauty thereof; *in the very marshes bearing goodly trees*, which for tallness, as also without knots, strived to reach up to the stars. It is a plain countrie and as level as the sea, which with green grasse allureth the eye. There is not the least portion of ground that lies waste there. Here you shall find the earth rising somewhere for apple trees, *there you shall have a field set with vines*, which either creep upon the ground or mount on high upon poles to support them." In 1343, it was a flooded fen;⁵ and we find frequent complaints in the records of the times, which were made by the distressed inhabitants for succour and redress.⁶

² Hen. Hunt, an. 1154.

³ Stuk. Paleog. Sacr. n. 2.

⁴ An. 1200.

⁵ Dugd. Imbank. p. 219.

⁶ The king's justices sat at Boston, 9 Edw. II, to make enquiry into the state of the drainage and other matters relating to the fens of Holland and Kesteven; when it was presented "that the prior of Haverholm ought to find a boat at the Bothe near the Wathe mouth, for to carry over the foot folks, as well by night as by day, whensoever any one should pass that way. And they said that he did neglect to do so, to the great damage of such people that had occasion to pass that way. And they said that the said watter was the public passage for all the king's liege people from Kesteven to the river of Witham. And they further said that the towns of Ewerby and Ousthorpe, which belonged to the prior, ought to maintain and repair the south side of the water which runneth from Appletree-ness to Kyme; and that it was then in decay, through the neglect of the prior of Haverholm, who ought to repair a great part thereof, and refused to do so; whereby the whole marsh of Kesteven and Holland was overflown and drowned.* A similar complaint was laid before the king in 1335, by Eubulo L'Estrange, who married Alice, daughter and heir of the Earl of Lincoln, and widow of the Earl of Lancaster, against Roger Pedwardine, of Burton, who was accused of having committed various outrages by cutting the sea and river banks, and thereby inundating the low country. A commission was issued to Richard de Willughby, Thomas de Sibthorp, John de Cressholm and John de Martin, empowering them to impanel a jury and make enquiry into

The fens continued in a state of absolute inundation down to a very recent period. The inhabitants of the intermediate ages appear to have abandoned all idea of rendering the lands useful for the purposes of agriculture; by converting great portions of them into turbaries;⁷ which ultimately made the ruins more extensive, and about the middle of the last century the winter floods came on with such irresistible force that the whole fen and part of the high land became a perfect sea. W. Hall, the water poet, who was born and brought up in Kyme fen, says from his own experience

'Twixt Frith bank and the wold side bound,
I question one dry inch of ground.
Now let me well be understood,
I speak as bounded by the flood;
From Lincoln all the way to Bourne,
Had all the tops of banks been one,
I really think they all would not
Have made a twenty acre spot.⁸

And forty years ago, a thousand acres in Blankney fen were annually let by public auction at Horncastle market; and the reserve bid was ten pounds.

The above information is exceedingly interesting, and many other changes appear in the district around us, that are equally

the alleged grievances; when it was found that the petitioner had suffered a damage in his property to the amount of one hundred pounds.†

*Dugd. Imbank. p. 200. †Rot. Pat. 9 Edw. III, p. 1, m. 27.

⁷ Madox. Formul. Angl. p. 251.

⁸ Hall. Aquatic Bardism, Canto 1. The same person says in prose;—
“I have times out of number seen cows, loosed out of their hovels and swim across a river, with nothing but their faces and horns above water, then take footing at mid-rib deep or less, *but not one spot of dry land*: then forage till weary and return to their hovels in the like swimming position. No place whatever more famous for this than Chapel Hill, which I have known for a long continuance of years previous to cutting the new river Witham, or to speak more fully, opening the Grand Sluice, inaccessible but by boat or riding horse-belly-deep and more in water and mud. I have also known the whole parish of Dockdyke, not two houses communicable for whole winters round, and sometimes scarcely in summer; which was in some measure the case of all the water side, quite up to Lincoln: and fully so at Willow Booth, Smeethe Hall, &c. (Biog. Ch. 2.) We used to carry the sheep to pasture in a lighter, (flat-bottomed boat) clip them in a lighter, and afterwards fetch them away by the same conveyance.” (Facts, &c.)

remarkable. New churches have risen up where old ones were decayed; and the erection of substantial farm houses and neat cottages have peopled the barren tracts with an active and industrious population. The fens are universally drained, and yield good crops of corn; the wolds, by the use of bone manure and marl, are become exceedingly productive, and the heath is inclosed and planted.

The advances which civilization has made on the higher lands in the neighbourhood of Sleaford, within the same brief period, are peculiarly striking, as will appear from a brief description of the various scenery now visible on the heath, which was formerly wild, barren and naked; possessing no appearance of civilization, stocked with rabbits, and covered with furze, bracken and irregular patches of long tough grass, which though green in summer, was in winter white; and offering to the view a continuous and interminable expanse of dreary waste.⁹

From the top of Dunsby hill we have a very extensive and varied prospect. The "sea of wood" which forms the back ground to the east and south, gives relief to the picture, and is agreeably diversified by the numerous spired churches¹⁰ whose

⁹ The heath was rendered still more terrific in the middle ages, by the system of robbery which I have noticed in the body of the work, and the feuds in which the hospitallers of Temple Bruer were continually engaged with their neighbours, particularly the Lords of Ashby; the origin of which I am inclined to attribute to the accidental circumstance, common enough in those early times, of an undefined boundary between the respective domains of each contending party. A narrow strip of land, about twenty chains in length, and at that extremity which join the lordship of Ashby about the same breadth, but diverging to a point, intruded itself like a wedge into the domain of Temple Bruer, and occasioned continual collisions between the the shepherds and warreners of each lord; who readily took up the matter on the ex-parte statements, greatly exaggerated, no doubt, of each of their servants, and soon assumed the character of principals in the dispute; and this paltry oxgang, which was not worth five shillings a year to either party, became the origin of a quarrel, which, from what we know of the general conduct of baronial feuds in those times of unbridled licentiousness, would doubtless involve the peasantry of the whole district in perpetual discord and disunion.

¹⁰ The highest church steeple in Europe is said to be that of Stratsburg; the next Salisbury, and the third Newark-upon-Trent. But perhaps the most curious steeple to be seen any where is that of Chesterfield; for look at it in whatever direction you choose, it seems to lean towards you, when in point of fact, the steeple is perfectly straight. (Com. Place Book, p. 74) Stow, in his Survey of London, says, that the spire of St. John, of Jerusalem, near Clerkenwell, was enamelled with several colors, azure, gold, &c. which made a noble show to the north parts of London, and was the only ornament on that side the City, of which he much laments the downfall.

slender crowns appear to surmount the umbrageous summit like a range of pinnacles to some vast cathedral; and in the distance eastward the graceful tower of Boston church overtops them all; while the tall steeple of Leasingham conveys life and animation to the foreground.¹¹

The panorama is perfect and produces something like a magical effect on the senses. The splendid spires of Heckington, Helpringham, and Aswarby, Ewerby and Anwick, Digby¹² and

¹¹ Tradition says that Leasingham mill house was formerly the rendezvous of a desperate gang of robbers who were connected with the celebrated Turpin; and it is also asserted that their trade of rapine and robbery was aided by several young men, the sons of respectable farmers in the neighbourhood. The situation, about the middle of the last century, was admirably adapted to their purpose; the wild heaths of Rauceby, and the extended field of Holdingham, immediately adjacent, being uninclosed and without an inhabitant. But the great post of terror was Dunsby hill. Here the brigand took his station; and the unfortunate traveller who passed after a certain hour of the night had no chance to escape. So notorious did this place become, that, in effecting insurances from Edinburgh to London, as was the custom of those times, the accidents of Dunsby hill were always specially excepted. The spot was infested by highwaymen down to a very recent period; but the erection of a pleasant row of cottage houses in the valley has compelled the freebooter to forsake his usual haunts.

¹² An old book of accounts belonging to this parish, affords a striking illustration of the prevalence of a vice to which our ancestors, a century ago, were inordinately addicted. I mean tippling; and the most remarkable feature about these accounts is the quantity of money spent at the public house. Every thing that occurred in the parish was converted into a pretext for drinking. The public ringing days were all punctually observed, as were the parochial perambulations, and other festive meetings. Thus:—

	£	s.	d.
1701. Ascention day—spent at Will Shortts	0	10	6
Spent with Mr. Stocks when he brought the books	0	0	6
Spent with the new Person and other neighbours	0	0	6

N. B.—The name of this new Parson was Jasper Middleditch.

1715. Spent at Widdow Shorts when we went a possioning on holy Thursday	0	10	0
And for a neck of mutton to the Butcher.....	0	1	3
Spent at Edward Sleaford, on holy Thursday	0	6	0

If a sermon was preached on a charitable occasion, something must also be spent.

1672. Given to a Petition with a parson preaching a sermon ..	0	5	0
Spent then with the townsmen !	0	2	0

If any repairs were necessary at the church, it was essential that the Churchwarden should spend his sixpence with the plumber at one time and the mason at another; then the glazier or the carpenter was wanted, and the same ceremony was observed. Whether money was paid or received, an extra expenditure was uniformly charged; as also at all agreements and auditing of accounts. Nay, an instance is recorded, in which a poor boy

Ashby de la Launde in the distance ; while below in the valley to the east, the humble towers of Ruskington and Dirrington¹³ point out the lowly house of God, the consecrated scene of village worship ; to the north and west, this spacious heath is extended with the towers of Lincoln Cathedral and Dunstan Pillar in the horizon rising out of a characteristic clump of trees ; and the tower of Temple Bruer, where the haughty knights of the Temple once had their princely residence, and were protected by a numerous train of armed retainers ; the intermediate space being dotted by farmsteads, accompanied with the substantial appendages of barns and granaries and streets of corn stacks, all bespeaking opulence and comfort, and exciting in the mind a train of ideas declaratory of Old English happiness, cemented by the exercise of British hospitality. I confess I gazed with admiration when I first beheld this scene ; and stern reality for a moment gave way to poetic thoughts and pastoral musings : but the blissful delusion was soon at an end, and I passed on under the reflection that it was something to have enjoyed even a moment's unalloyed happiness.

The quiet monotony of the heath towards the north-west just emerging from its pristine state of nakedness, is finely contrasted by the line of wood eastward, commencing at the turnpike and extending to the fen ; the various tints of the falling leaves, (for it was in the month of October that this sketch was written) formed a beautiful picture, to which the spire¹⁴ of

met with an accident that lamed him, and coming to be cured at the charge of the parish, the expenditure in ale by the parish officer almost equals the amount of the cure. In a word, a great number of entries in every year refer to tippling ; and though in a few instances the pretences have been so absurd that the vestry have refused to allow the charges, yet mostly they have been passed as matters of course. A reflection which the scribe has inserted on a blank page of the book harmonizes finely with the above account :—

“ Lord what is man that thou should mindful be of such a Retch of such a brute as hee.”

¹³ When Cromwell's troopers were employed in the delectable amusement of hunting the cavaliers, several of them sought refuge in a barn of Mr. Todkill's, still standing at Dirrington ; and were concealed in a barley mow, according to tradition, at the time when some of the soldiers entered ; and although they got upon the very mow where the fugitives lay hid, and stuck their swords up to the hilt in several places, yet the royalists remained undiscovered. So great was the distress throughout the country at this calamitous period, when it was ravaged by the republican troops quartered at Sleaford ; that in the village of Dirrington, pease were ground with barley into meal for the peasantry. But even this coarse fare did not escape ; for frequently when a batch of bread was baked the soldiers came and wrested it away from the famished people.

¹⁴ In the time of the Commonwealth the spires of Churches were

Ashby Church, and the retired village of Branswell in the valley gave life and animation; and in the distance beyond were the blue hills about Spilsby.

Proceeding further to the north, the partition-walls of stone still convey a peculiarity to the scenery on this once barren tract, which has gradually improved in its appearance. The line of planting which Mr. Chaplin has nearly completed as a private drive from Blankney to the Green Man, has made a wonderful change for the better in this part of the heath; and this, with the rising shrubberies¹⁵ and hedge-row timber in most of the places where white thorn has been substituted for stone fences, will, in time, convert the heath into the semblance of a forest.¹⁶

objects of horror and disgust to the puritans. This steeple-hating propensity is thus ridiculed by Randolph, in his *Muse's Looking Glass*.

Microprepes. "I am churchwarden, and we are this year
To build our steeple up: now to save charges
I'll get a high crown'd hat with five low bells
To make a peal shall serve as sweet as Bow.

Colax. 'Tis wisely cast,
And like a careful steward of the church,
Of which the steeple is no part; at least,
No necessary.

Bird. Verily 'tis true,
They are the wicked Synagogues where those instruments
Of superstition and idolatry ring,
Warning to sin, and chime all to the devil."

¹⁵ The series of shrubberies and plantation which have been introduced into the lordship of Blankney, by the taste of its proprietor, have produced a very pleasing appearance in several situations. There are some delightful spots where an individual, fond of solitude and retirement might wish to spend his days. The scenery is artificial, but it has been disposed with judgment, and the effect is admirable.

¹⁶ On the heath are many vestiges of vast trenches, some in pairs running in parallel lines within half a mile of each other; several of which are obliterated by the plough; others remain wide and deep and protected by high banks; but the old warreners remember them all much more capacious than any of the remains; and they say from the report of their predecessors, that these excavations were traditionally called Oliver's trenches—intimating that they had been thrown up during the civil wars of Charles I. Now men at present living, of eighty years old, having heard their grandfathers repeat as a current tradition of their youth that such was the name of these singular remains, affords a degree of credit to the story which appears perfectly satisfactory; for two or three such generations will carry us back to the times when Cromwell flourished; and hence the tradition is fully entitled to our belief. But however it may be true that many of these ditches were cut for the protection of hostile armies lying contiguous to each other at that period; I still think that some of them

On a ridge of high land to the south of the direct road from Ashby to Scopwick, the view, on a fine October's morning, is very panoramic. Looking towards the north the gradual clothing of the heath appears in the plantations at the Temple Grange and other places within the line of vision, while further to the east the whole view is bounded by Mr. Chaplin's plantations, with the summit of Dunstan Pillar towering above them; which always appears to me in the light of a friend cheering the heart of many a way-faring traveller who trod with devious steps the wide and pathless heath, before inclosures and superior civilization rendered its services unnecessary. In the foreground is Scopwick Lodge and Mill, with the farmstead and shrubberies, which form a picturesque auxiliary to the pleasing scene.

In all the heath views, Dunstan Pillar is a prominent object.¹⁷ It owes its foundation to a considerable wager which was accepted by the proprietor of Dunstan, that he could not raise a column of a given altitude on a prescribed base of narrow dimensions.¹⁸ He succeeded, and afterwards introduced a

are entitled to claim a much higher antiquity. History informs us that the Danes encamped on this ground after their battle with the Mercians, in Lindsey, and the destruction of Bardney Abbey, and remained there to recruit their strength before they proceeded to further devastations in the south; and it is highly probable that one of their chiefs died on the heath, and was buried perhaps in one of the existing tumuli; for a deep ravine which runs across this part of the heath, still bears the Danish appellation of Asketel, and this might have been the name of the chief whose remains were here interred.

¹⁷ The following description of this Pillar in 1774, may be interesting. "Six miles from Temple Bruer on the road to Lincoln, on a hill, is a light-house built about 20 years ago by Lord Despencer. It is an exceeding lofty square tower, with a staircase to the top, which terminates in a flat roof, upon which is erected a kind of large glass case, in which is every night contained the light. Round the base of the tower is a neat square court, with a little dwelling-house at each corner; these were evidently built for the sake of uniformity, as only one of the houses is inhabited; there is a gate into the court on one side, and on the other a large plantation of firs. This building is a pleasing ornament to the county, and was intended as a signal to travellers to direct their course; however this use is now rendered less necessary by the new turnpike."—Gent.'s Mag. vol. 44, p. 299.

¹⁸ A curious anecdote got into circulation about the time when this Pillar was built that displays the popular feeling on this ridiculous wager, the results of which were of such essential benefit to the community at large. Shortly after it was erected an itinerant showman appeared at Nocton Hall to exhibit the popular drama of Punch and Judy; and from the servants' hall the portable theatre was introduced into the drawing

lighted beacon on its summit as a guide to benighted travellers passing over the heath.¹⁹ This use being superseded by the establishment of permanent roads, the late Marquis of Buckinghamshire removed the light and substituted a statue of King George III at the Jubilee.²⁰

The view from the turnpike road at Quarrington²¹ towards the south and east is exceedingly rich and beautiful. The spired churches convey an interest to the scenery of Kesteven, which is delightful. What way soever the eye is directed they are sure to appear in all their picturesque varieties. And this forms a distinguishing feature of the Parts of Kesteven. It is a peculiarity which I noticed and admired many years ago when I knew the country but as a passing traveller in the coach. But it is only by deliberate and repeated studies of the diversity which nature and art have combined to place before the eye, that the beauty and richness of their joint productions can be fully estimated. The undulating surface of the ground, forming a succession of hill and valley, has been prepared by nature as a superb arena for the exercise of taste and ingenuity in man ;

room, which at that time was full of company. The fellow who had been dictated to by some lover of fun in the party, after the usual exhibition, put into Punch's mouth the question, "Who erected that pillar on the heath?" "Sir Francis Dashwood" was the answer. "What was it built for?" "Nobody can tell." How the conversation might have terminated is not known, for the dialogue was suddenly stopped by Sir Francis, who was present, and Punch dismissed.

¹⁹ About 50 or 60 years ago, the pillar, or lighthouse as it was then called, presented a scene of periodical gaiety which drew together a great deal of good company. The meetings were on a Thursday afternoon during the summer season, and the neighbouring gentry of both sexes assembled for tea and cards ; and on great occasions, when they were accommodated by the officers of any regiment stationed at Lincoln, with the use of the military band, a dance on the green was added to the usual amusements of the day. Sir John King Dashwood at length built a large room for the accommodation of the company ; but the boon came too late. The changes which took place in fashionable society about that time in the hour of dinner, broke up the meeting, and the new room was subsequently converted into a farm house.

²⁰ His Majesty, on being informed of the compliment thus intended by the Marquis, did not feel pleased at the exposure of his person *in the sterile fens of Lincolnshire*, as he conceived the place to be ; but was reconciled when the actual situation of the Pillar was explained to him.

²¹ During the time that Cromwell's troops remained at Sleaford, the market was held in Quarrington field, probably for the purpose of preventing the occurrence of disputes between them and the country people, which might produce bloodshed.

and it will not be too much to say that considerable talent has been displayed in laying out the broad demesne to the best advantage for picturesque effect. In many cases this would be purely accidental because from the different dates of the improvements the several proprietors could not possibly act in concert; yet though taste might and did vary on contiguous estates, these anomalies have not been found to militate against the production of an harmonious whole.

The Green Man on Lincoln Heath is an existing instance of the civilization of modern times; as it affords a place of safety and rest, where in former days the dread, equally of robbers and of being bewildered on the wide expanse, deterred travellers from passing that way except in cases of pressing necessity. At this inn is a spacious room built by Thomas Chaplin, Esq. about the year 1740, as a club-room for the nobility and gentry residing in this part of the County, to hold their periodical meetings.²² In the room is a range of busts, with names and arms of the members, modelled in alabaster and placed on the wall within oval panels. As these casts are portraits, some of them have been removed, as that of Watson Lord Sondes, Captain King,²³ of Ashby, and some others.

²² The club met once a month in the summer season for convivial purposes; for at the beginning or middle of the last century clubs of this kind were very much in vogue; and in town, tavern dissipation was the favorite amusement of peer, commoner, and wit. In the large room at the Green Man the symposiasts held their periodical sittings, and according to the custom of the period, which was distinguished by excessive drinking, they seldom parted sober. A small building at the corner of the green was used by these stout fellows, as a smoking room. A dinner, bowls on the adjoining green; conversation and repartee over their wine, punch, and pipes, formed the objects of their meeting.

²³ There is an anecdote related of this gentleman which is rather characteristic. The members of the club met to deliberate on the proper situation which ought to be assigned to each of these busts, and it was determined that as the property on which they assembled belonged to Mr. Chaplin, he and his two sons should be placed over the entrance door, flanked on the east by Nowell and Dashwood, and on the west by Whichcote; and that the nobility should occupy the entire south wall. When this arrangement was completed, Captain King was the only member unprovided for. "And where shall we place him?" was the natural enquiry. To which he laughingly replied—for he was a good-tempered man, and would either give or take a joke with admirable suavity—"My place is decided by nature. Here are many titled men—and more connected with nobility by marriage or descent—but I am none of these. My family, though ancient, is not noble, and yet I claim the first and most honorable situation; for by the universal custom of all nations, the KING takes precedence of the nobility." Whether his claim was conceded or not the anecdote does not mention; nor are the means of ascertaining the fact in

On the south side of the room are eight panels, which are thus filled in:—

1. Blank.
2. Lord Tyrconnel, Belton.
Shield. Ar. an inescutcheon within an orle of martlets. Supporters. Two lions rampant ar. langued gu.
3. Lord Vere Bertie, Branston.
Shield. Ar. 3 battering rams in pale, armed and garnished, az. Supporters. Dexter. A friar with his staff. Sinister. A savage with wreaths about his temples and loins.
4. Lord Charles Manners.
Shield. Or. 2 bars az. On a chief quarterly, 1 and 4. Az. 2 fleur-de-lis or. 2 and 3 Gu. a lion passant gardant. or. Supporters. Defaced.
5. Lord Sherwood Manners.
6. Lord Robert Manners.
Arms of both. Same as 4.
- 7 and 8. Blank.

On the east end are two blank panels, as also on the west; and in the north are 9 panels, as follows:—

1. Bennett Nowell.
Shield. Fretty, er and—
2. Blank.
3. Robert Dashwood, Wellingore.
Shield Defaced.
4. Charles Chaplin, Blankney.
5. Thomas Chaplin, Blankney.
6. John Chaplin, Blankney.
Shield to each. Er. on a fess indented vert, 3 griffins heads proper, each gorged with a mural crown. The two sons have a crescent for difference.
7. A bust. Name and arms defaced.
8. Thomas Whichcote, Harpswell.
Shield. Er. 2 sangliers trippant gu.
9. Blank.²⁴

existence, for the bust has been removed. The first panel however is without its appendage which may give some colour to the accuracy of the story. It was a common and well-remembered observation of the same gentleman, that the club contained the three estates of the realm, King, Lords, and Commons.

²⁴ Many of these busts exhibit considerable marks of intelligence. Lord Tyrconnel has a fine burly countenance; but there is a shrewd cast of feature in that of Dashwood, which implies irony and caustic wit. He was doubtless a boon companion and a pleasant friend; yet the half suppressed sneer which is so accurately delineated, marks the man; who, if his joke and his friend were placed in the balances, would suffer the latter to kick the beam. John and Charles Chaplin were only boys

Another striking change in the district about Sleaford, conveys a welcome reflection on the peculiar liberties and privileges which an improved state of the laws of England convey to the meanest subject equally with the most powerful noble; and evinces the vast moral superiority which we enjoy over our ancestors of the fifteenth century in their most exalted state. Then fortified castles and manor houses frowned in every part of the country; and towers and battlements bristled up their warlike heads for the protection, alike of noble and churchman; to which they retreated in times of danger, and whence they dictated their arbitrary edicts to trembling tenants and retainers. These fortresses of terror are no more, and the chains which now bind the tenant to his lord are those of kindness and affection founded on the high and inalienable principle of moral obligation.²⁵ Of the baronial residencies of the Longchamps²⁶ and Pedwardines,²⁷ the Vescys,²⁸ the Bardolfs,²⁹ and Evering-

when the casts were taken. There is a gratification in beholding even the room where these votaries of bacchanalian glory held their periodical symposiacs; but with the addition of the busts, where they are figured to the life, with their precise heads of hair and queues, all dressed alike with the utmost care according to the prevailing mode; it is a treat of very high character.

²⁵ The steady industry and patient endurance of fatigue which are exhibited by the labouring class, in this part of the country, are beyond all praise; especially during the season of harvest. In the hottest months they are in the field by day-break with their wives and families; the former to bind up the sheaves, and children so young as six years of age are employed in making up the bands; while those who are still younger amuse themselves or take care of the infants. In this manner will they work day by day under the influence of a burning sun, till darkness supersedes their labor, and warns them of the necessity of refreshment and rest.

²⁶ This family inherited property in the neighbourhood of Sleaford, by marriage of William de Longchamp with Petronilla the heiress of the great family of Croun; but kept it only two descents, for his granddaughter Alicia was married to Roger, the son of Walter Pedwardine, of Gloster.

²⁷ These families were both of Burton, and they are thus mentioned in an ancient MS. *Rogerus de Pedwardyn duxit Aliciam filiam et heredem Henrici de Longchamp. Qui quidem Rogerus Ecclesiam de Burton Pedwardyn cum capella excepto le South aisle, cum capella Sci Nicolai Epi constructis per parochiarios ejusdem villæ.*

²⁸ Robert and Yvo de Vesci attended the Conqueror into England, who bestowed on the former the lordship of Caythorpe with its members, viz. Friskney, Normanton, Sugbrooke, Willoughby, Handebeck and half the town of Ancaster; where in the reign of Edw. I, William de Vescy had charters for a market on Friday, and an annual fair on St. James's day, with all the liberties and free customs appertaining thereto. (*Placit. de quo war. p. 395.*)

²⁹ A branch of the family of Bardolf resided in the manor house at

hams,³⁰ the Latimers³¹ and Busseys,³² the Hardbys and Berties,³³ the Ryes³⁴ and the De la Laundes,³⁵ scarcely a vestige remains to point out their former magnificence or strength. The religious houses which were an ornament to this part of the country, have most of them vanished; and the brief and imperfect memorial of the few crumbling relics that remain may serve to rescue their name from oblivion. The castle at Sleaford, and the Old Place³⁶ will be noticed in the body of the work; but of

Ruskington. It is unknown when that mansion was finally taken down, but in a place called Stray Green, near Lady Hodgson's Alms houses, which formerly belonged to the lord of the manor, and is now the property of Earl Winchelsea, are plain evidences of the hall or manor house; for the pasture is full of those irregularities of surface that indicate the existence of foundations and vaults which have not been levelled by art, but covered over by nature.

³⁰ This family succeeded the Bardolfs at Ruskington, and their arms and impalements were profusely scattered over the windows of that church in the reign of Charles I.

³¹ The Latimers were settled in a part of the parish of Helpringham, now called Thorpe Latimer, where they had a charter for a fair, 44 Hen. III. The estates passed to the family of Lord Willoughby, temp. Hen. VII, by virtue of a concord between George Nevill with Maud, Countess of Cambridge, the widow of his half uncle John Lord Latimer, viz. that of the lands which belonged formerly to the said John Lord Latimer, Sir John Willoughby, Knight, who descended from Elizabeth, his sister and co heir, should have two parts; and George Nevill one part. In pursuance of this concord the lands at Helpringham, &c. came to the family of Willoughby de Broke, and its representative is at present lord of the manor of this place.

³² The Busseys, of Haydor, came out of Normandy, with the Conqueror; and Jordan de Bussey, in the reign of Stephen, was made governor of Lincoln Castle, on the treaty between that monarch and Prince Henry; with an undertaking that on the demise of Stephen he should hold it for Henry. (M. Paris.) The family remained at Haydor down to the 17th century.

³³ Appendix A.

³⁴ There exists great difficulty in making out the pedigree of this ancient family. They came in with the Conqueror, as appears from the Roll of Battle Abbey, but they are named before that event; and the first of the family, Hubert de Rye was a trusty servant of William, Duke of Normandy, and was employed by him in a sumptuous embassy to Edward the Confessor, and returned back with three tokens, whereby Edward declared him heir to the crown of England; viz. a sword, in the hilt whereof were enclosed the relics of several saints; a hunter's horn of gold, and the head of a mighty stag.

³⁵ The family of De la Launde were seated at Ashby, which hence took their name. They became possessed of the property by marriage with Cecilia, sister and co-heir of Jordan de Essheby.

³⁶ Appendix B.

that at Kyme once the residence of the brave and the fair; the happy seat of all that was noble in arts and arms, in the person of the accomplished Earl of Angus, and after him of Sir Gilbert Tailbois, Lord Kyme, "who have passed away like a shadow and are not,"³⁷ it may be interesting to offer a few remarks. The castle³⁸ has been dismantled to the very foundations, but

³⁷ Leland mentions the "goodly house and park" as being in a flourishing state, during the reign of Henry VIII., and occupied by the last Lord Tailbois, to whose memory there is a brass plate in the north wall of Kyme Church, with the following inscription in church text. "Here lyeth Gylbert Taylboys lorde Taylboys Lorde of Khyme, wych married Elizabeth Blount, one of the dowghters of Ser John Blount of Kynlet in the counte of Shropshier knight, which lorde Taylboys departed fourth of this world the XV. day of April A. Dno MCCCCXXX. whose solle God pardon. Amen." It is much to be regretted that the above inscription is all that remains of this once splendid tomb, which was of polished marble, and adorned with the bearings of all the allied families. From neglect it had fallen into a very dilapidated state previous to taking down the old church in 1807, and was found totally incapable of being restored. It had the figure of a gentleman kneeling with his spurs on; over his head the arms of Tailbois, and on his right shoulder the same shield, except that there was but one escallop in chief instead of three. On the sinister side was the figure of a lady in an attitude of devotion, with the arms of Blount over her dress. Both these figures were in brass, and had scrolls with latin inscriptions issuing from their mouths. At a cottage in this parish I was shown a well-glazed brown earthen jar, which the woman assured me was taken from the family vault of the above lord Tailbois, that had been exposed during the process of renewing the church; and she further said that according to tradition, it originally contained the bowels of that nobleman. It appeared however of too modern a structure to have been appropriated to any such purpose.

³⁸ From the family of Kyme who first resided at the castle, the estates passed to Umfraville, Earl of Angus, by marriage with the daughter and heir in the reign of Edw. II; and in two descents the name of Umfraville failing in its turn, by an entail the Kyme barony and estates became vested in Walter Tailbois, son of Henry Tailbois, by marriage with Elizabeth Burden, the granddaughter and heir of Gilbert Umfraville. This family resided in Kyme castle, and continued for six descents, when the male issue again failing, the Kyme property was dispersed. Thomas Wymbish, of Nocton, who married the daughter and co-heir, claimed to use the style and title of Lord Kyme, but as he had no issue, his claim was disallowed. His widow marrying Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, the North Kyme property passed into his family; from whence it came into possession, first of Earl Fitzwilliam, and ultimately of Mrs. Ibbetson, where it now remains. The castle and estates of South Kyme became vested in Sir Edward Dymoke by marriage with Ann, sister and co-heir; and he and his descendants resided there till the beginning of the last century, when the main building was taken down, and the estates sold to the Duke of Newcastle, from whom they passed by purchase to the father of the present proprietor Sir Abraham Hume, Bart. The barony of Kyme is considered

the tower or keep is in a most excellent state of preservation. Built of a close-grained freestone of the firmest texture,³⁹ and with walls seven feet thick, time can have no effect upon it. In the walls are small round holes, which probably contained spikes, exhibited in terrorem as prepared for the quartered limbs of traitors or other determined enemies of the lord of the Castle.⁴⁰ The roof is gone as are also the floors of the two upper stories; but the lower story has a vaulted roof so strongly groined with eight ribs of stone, that it has sustained no dilapidation, and displays in proud supremacy, the baronial arms of Umfraville, viz. Gu, a cinquefoil within an orle of cross crosslets, or, at the junction of the rib-work, in the centre of the roof. This room was unquestionably a dungeon or place of imprisonment, for it has no light save what is derived from three narrow loop holes. It might also be used, in the absence of captives, as a store house. The tower was accessible from the castle by this avenue, which formed the termination of a narrow passage; and also by a small arched doorway in the second story from a corresponding passage above. Thus if the garrison found themselves unable to defend the castle, they might take refuge in the keep, and cut off all communication between the two, by demolishing the passages; and in this case the lower apartment would certainly be used as a dépôt for stores and provisions.

The three upper stories, attained by a circular stone staircase of 104 steps, placed in the south-east buttress, are well-lighted by a noble window in each face of the square tower of two lights each with stone mullions and trefoil heads, a quatrefoil being inserted under the recess in the arch. The battlements are perfect as is also a turret at the south-east angle, which forms the summit of the stone staircase, and is ascended by a moveable ladder. The bartizan or platform is supported by a slender cylinder rising from the central balustrade of the circular

to be in abeyance between the heirs general of the Dymoke line, and the representatives of the other sisters and co-heirs; unless affected by the attainder of William, the father of Sir Thomas Tailbois, who was restored 12 Edw. V.

³⁹ Old people were living a few years ago who remembered the remains of the castle; and they state generally, that the walls were adorned with carvings representing equestrian figures in armour and other enrichments.

⁴⁰ Mr. King mentions this custom. (Mun. Ant. vol. 3, p. 274.) "Fixed on the top of the church near Grismond Castle, in Monmouthshire, I was shown long horrible spikes or hooks, still remaining in the year 1788, on which tradition affirms, the heart and entrails of John of Kent were fixed, after his execution in the time of Hen. IV. He was accused of being a sorcerer, &c. and was put to death as a heretic and a rebel."

staircase, and the roof is vaulted with stone,⁴¹ and handsomely ornamented with tracery carved in relief. This turret was probably a watch tower; and it is admirably calculated for that purpose, for it commands a view of many miles in extent. The sea and Boston on the east; Lincoln on the north; the cliffs westerly; and on the south the fens of Holland. A communication has been formed on the two accessible sides of the turret, between it and the battlements, by flights of steps unconnected with the general staircase, which must have been exceedingly useful during an attack.

The story above the ground floor, called the Chequered Chamber, probably from its pavement, was used by the soldiers as a common room; the story above was for the servants and officers of the household, and the upper story was for the use of the family during a siege. How many separate apartments these two last were divided into we have no means of ascertaining, but it would depend entirely on circumstances, for the partition walls were formed only of simple hanging of arras or tapestry,⁴² but the existence of a window on each of the four faces of the keep, would seem to indicate that each story was formed into four rooms.

The remains of the moat are still visible, and in some places it is a formidable defence when full of water. The gateway was fortified by portcullis, draw-bridge and flanking towers, on one of which was an elevated parapet and platform, where, according to the voice of tradition, the ladies took their

⁴¹ The materials of which castles were built varied according to the places of their erection. Thus Kyme and Sleaford were of stone, and Tattershall of brick. But the manner of their construction appears to have been pretty uniform. The outsides of the walls were composed of the square material, the insides being generally filled in with fluid mortar, called groutwork. The angles were coigned, and the arches turned with squared stone.

⁴² These hangings were sometimes very costly. Spenser thus describes them in his "Fairie Queene."

For round about, the walls y'clothed were,
 With goodly arras, of great majesty,
 Woven with gold and silke, so close and nere,
 That the rich metall lurked privily,
 As faining to be hidd from envious eye.
 Yet here and there and every where, unawares
 It showed itself, and shone unwillingly,
 Like a discoloured snake whose hidden snares,
 Thro' the greene gras his long, bright burnish'd back declares.

seats to witness the sports and pageants of the times, particularly the bull and bear baitings, which were the favourite amusement of the nobility and gentry during many ages of our history; and accommodations were made for the convenience of ascending to the summit of the main tower to behold the hunting of deer,⁴³ foxes, and other field diversions.

This magnificent castle, formerly the scene of baronial splendour and festivity, exhibits a melancholy evidence of the vanity of all human pursuits, and the uncertainty of all human speculations; and while engaged in the contemplation of its massive architecture crumbling to decay, and its desolated windows, through which the bleak wind howls a requiem on its fallen greatness, we are tempted to exclaim, in the language of our immortal bard,

The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
And all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a wreck behind.

The Halls at Dunsby,⁴⁴ and Helpringham,⁴⁵ are quite gone; as are also the manor houses of Leasingham, Burton, Howel, Haydor and Heckington; and that at Metheringham is converted into a house of residence for labourers.⁴⁶

⁴³ The family resident here had their beuftery, vaccary, and deer park, all of which are localized by retaining their primitive names, even at the present time.

⁴⁴ Gibson in his additions to Camden, (Col. 476.) mentions a hall at Dunsby, "three miles north of Sleaford;" but all tradition of such a building is lost among the inhabitants of this district, except that the site had the reputation of being haunted, and the ghost was designated by the familiar soubriquet of "Dicky Dunsby." The village of Dunsby is totally demolished, its church destroyed, and for all purposes ecclesiastical and civil, the lordship is united with the adjacent parish of Branswell.

⁴⁵ The old mansion was finally taken down at the latter end of the last century; and in the present year (1834) as some labourers were digging for gravel, near the spot where it stood, they discovered two skeletons about two feet below the surface in a perfect state.

⁴⁶ At the conquest Walter Deincourt held the principal part of Metheringham, though Robert de Stratford had the manor. It soon passed into the Kyme family, and we find 9 Edward III. that William de Kyme had a patent for it, and from them through the Umfravilles and and Tailbois to the Dymokes, along with the South Kyme property. In the middle of the last century it belonged to Sir Bridges Skipwith, Bart.,

The manor house at Burton Pedwardine, recently rebuilt to the west of the church yard and almost adjoining to it, was anciently moated round; and a field to the south still retaining the name of "The Parks," contained a spacious vivarium for the use of the family, who made this village their residence. The number of foundations which appear under the irregularities of surface in different parts of the village, afford sufficient evidence of its early population.⁴⁷

In the fifteenth century the ancient family of Bussey lived at Haydor, in a mansion with a castellated gateway, which was situated on the north side of the church, and is now entirely swept away, having been finally taken down about ten years ago,⁴⁸ and the materials employed in the construction of a farm house.

of whose family it was purchased by the late Mr. Chaplin. In the reign of queen Elizabeth, a melancholy accident happened at Metherringham, by which the church, with the exception of its outer walls, was entirely destroyed. A fire, originating, as is supposed in Mr. Dymoke's dog-kennels, made such a devastation as to desolate the whole village. The following entry in the parish register conveys this fact to posterity. "Upon the 9th day of July this year (1599) the Greatest pte of Metherringham with the church was all burnt Downe to the Ground." In taking down old houses, the workmen still find vestiges of this destructive fire. The church was restored without delay, and we find dates on different parts of it which mark the period of its re-edification. On a buttress placed at the west end to support the tower is A. D. 1601; on the door is E. R. (Eliz. Regina) 1602, which is repeated on the pulpit. The bells were recast and bear date 1620.

⁴⁷ Here in the fifteenth century resided the family of Pedwardine. They were succeeded by Sir Thomas Horseman, in memory of whom is a splendid monument in the chapel of Burton church. The manor passed by marriage into the family of Orby Hunter, Esq., by whom it was sold to the late Mr. Handley.

⁴⁸ As I have not had an opportunity of inspecting the localities of this parish, I transcribe Dr. Yerburch's account of the foundations of Haydor Castle. "In a field west of the village, and only a few hundred yards from the church, we saw the most decided proofs of the existence here, at one time, of a castle, which, judging from the very extended area which it clearly occupied, must have been an edifice of vast size. The foundations of its massy walls, gate-house, keep and *tower-ets* are singularly traceable; and although "not one stone now remains upon another," yet the immense banks of earth which were cast up when the foundations of this building were razed, speak the most convincing language of its ancient strength and glory. This is truly a very interesting spot; and we cannot but regret, in common, no doubt, with those of our readers whose feelings are alive on subjects of antiquity, that we have not been able to meet with any, even the slightest written document relating to this castle, and have

The hall at Cranwell in which the family of Thorold⁴⁹ resided for many generations, was a spacious mansion of stone, with a superb staircase of black oak, and a magnificent dining room lighted by eight windows, as I am informed. The grounds are well planted, and the avenues of old trees containing a rookery, indicate the antiquity of the residence. In front of the house were a succession of terraces, mounted by stone steps; and the number of perennial flowers that still grow wild in the plantations and premises, afford a testimony of the horticultural and floral taste of the family.

There was formerly a market and a hall or manor-house at Heckington,⁵⁰ the former has been discontinued beyond the time of memory, and the latter was taken down about 50 years ago. It was a building in the style of the 17th century. An entrance-porch to the hall had a chamber over it, and a shield which has been preserved and placed in front of the present building: Fretty, er. and—On a chief an estoile. The premises, including orchard and garden were moated round, and were accessible by a draw-bridge to the westward.⁵¹

nothing to guide us but tradition, and that merely says, there was formerly a castle here. It was probably built by one of the Busseys, under the licence granted by King Stephen, and destroyed in the general demolition which took place in the reign of Hen. II., and doubtless the house in which the above family resided was built, shortly after, out of the materials of the said castle." (Hist. Sleaford, p. 224.)

⁴⁹ The manor was in the possession of the Thorolds soon after the Reformation. They purchased it of Charles, Duke of Suffolk, to whom it was granted as part and parcel of the lands belonging to the dissolved preceptory of Temple Bruer. The knights had it in frank almoigne of the abbey of Ramsay, who held it of the king in chief.

⁵⁰ This hall was occupied by the family of Beaumont in the 15th century from whom it passed to Lord Willoughby d'Eresby; and at the beginning of the 17th century we find Henry Lord Cobham resident here. His descendants remained about 60 years in occupation of the hall, when, on the death of lady Cobham, the residence was removed to Cressy Hall, at Surfleet, together with the furniture and family pictures, some of which remained in the ruins of Cressy Hall at the beginning of the present century; and the mansion at Heckington was suffered to fall to decay. The manor was subsequently vested in the Herons, of Surfleet, from which family it was purchased by the late Mr. Handley, of Sleaford.

⁵¹ To the east of the Car-dyke, in the hamlet of Garwick, about half a mile north of the turnpike-road, was a few years since, an old building called Holmes House. It was erected on a foundation of wrought stone, which reached to about 3 feet above the surface of the ground; the upper part of the edifice being composed of timber cross beams, filled in with stud and plaister. Its height was 3 stories. The front door was thickly set

The manor house at Howel⁵² was occupied in the times here referred to by the family of Hebden; and it is highly probable that it was a castellated mansion, although no

with nail heads, and had a curious ring or handle. The window frames, and indeed the whole of the timbers were very ancient, and of oak. The house was taken down in 1810, and a new one erected by Mr. Lievesley, who states that after making the entire foundations of his house out of the old stone, he converted the remainder into upward of 30 chaldrons of lime. The Car-dyke enters this parish near Garrick, and leaves it again at Howel engine. Dr. Stukeley says there was a chain of forts along this dyke, to protect the trade vessels passing and repassing; and that there was one at Garrick. No vestiges of this fort remain at the present time. In the great floods to which these fens were subjected about 50 or 60 years ago, boats were moored near to Garrick milestone. Thus William Hall, the Kyme water poet, says

————— Near to Garwick milestone
 Nothing there grew beneath the sky,
 But willows scarcely six feet high,
 Or osiers barely three feet dry;
 And those of only one year's crop
 The floods did fairly overtop;
 By Kyme and the Six Hundred banks,
 Previous to inclosing pranks,
 Looking due north, saw nothing dry
 Till Tatsel castle caught my eye.
 The last time I was on that way,
 From recollection took survey;
 And found one hundred yards of line,
 My boat and milestone would combine.

The enclosure however converted these fens into profitable land, although it appears to have been an unpopular measure at the time; and we find in the *Gentlemen's Magazine* a very unfavourable picture of the anticipated results. Indeed the writer terms it "a very satire upon the judgment and patriotism of its promoters." (*Gents. Mag.* vol. 44. p. 255.) The gloomy prophecy has not been fulfilled, for Heckington is now a good corn parish, and civilization has made a rapid progress since that period.

⁵² We find the manor of Howel, so early as the middle of the 14th century in the possession of the family of Hebden, which was connected by marriage with Rye, Luttrell, Lambert, and Dymoke. In the 15th century it escheated to the crown at the termination of the contest which placed Edw. IV. on the throne; and the king by Letters Patent gave it to John Pilkington, being previously the property of Thomas Claymond, attainted per servic' debit.' (*Rot. Pat.* 1 Edw. IV. n. 64. and 4 Edw. IV. p. 5. m. 25.) Subsequently the manor of Howel was vested in the Dymokes, who transferred it, along with the Kyme estates, to the Duke of Newcastle, A. D. 1730. That nobleman sold it to Sir William Smith, Bart., from whom it passed to Sir William Moore, Bart., who held it in the year 1760. The lordship was again disposed of in 1802, when Mr. Ingall became possessed of two-third parts, and Mr. Vessey of one-third and the manor. The niece of Mr. Ingall was married by a Mr. Werge, of Hexgrave,

documents⁵³ remain to support such an opinion ; but it is well known that the Aula, Hall or Court House, where the Hundred Courts were held, was usually fortified for greater security. The time when it was ultimately taken down is also uncertain, but the moats still remain, and they are said to be 20 feet deep. The breadth is also considerable ; and they were doubtless excavated for defence, like those of Kyme, Tattershall and other places in the neighbourhood. They enclose a square space of about 16 acres, which is subdivided by two moats running parallel to each other across the area, and of equal breadth and depth with the outer ditch. The place is called the Hall Garth or Close to this day.⁵⁴

The hall at Leasingham⁵⁵ occupied a commanding situation at the entrance of this pleasant village, adjoining the turnpike-road from Sleaford to Lincoln, and was inhabited in the 15th century by the family of Yorke. At the conclusion of the civil wars, and after the restoration of Charles II. the family removed to Burton Pedwardine, and the hall was suffered to decay ; but it was not finally taken down till the middle of the last century.⁵⁶

near Southwell, and this estate formed a part of the marriage portion ; which is now (1834) in the hands of trustees to his two sons. Henry Machin, Esq., of Gateford Hall, near Worksop, the nephew and heir of Mr. Vessey, now has the manor of Howel.

⁵³ I am told that an old man who died about 4 years ago, at the age of 84, used to say that about 70 or 80 years since, he was present when all the papers and evidences were removed from the parish chest, by a gentleman who came in his carriage for that purpose.

⁵⁴ Mr. Brookes the tenant informs me, that some time ago he took up within the area, several carved stones, amongst which were some steps of a circular staircase, which must have been attached to a turret or tower.

⁵⁵ The occupiers of the manor house at Leasingham from the conquest to the time when David de Fletwick came into possession, A. D. 1305, are unknown, for the public records are silent on the subject ; and the moiety of the lordship which belonged to Geoffery Alselin at that period was soke of the manor of Ruskington. In the reign of the Confessor it was inhabited by the representative of Barne the Saxon. He was ejected by the Normans to make room for Adam, who was placed there by Remigius the first Norman bishop of Lincoln. In the 14th century it passed successively through the hands of Thomas of Newmarket and Sir John Bardolf Chivaler, into those of the family of Yorke, who retain the manor by female inheritance to the present day.

⁵⁶ A report that it was haunted by supernatural visitants was the proximate cause of its desertion, as popular tradition certifies ; and so strongly was the belief and consequent dread of the apparition implanted

The remains of Temple Bruer and Catley are next to be considered. The former is situated in a retired valley on the heath,⁵⁷ surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills not far distant from the Hermen-street; and it was connected with that road by a private way winding through a ravine which communicated with the fortified entrance to the Temple, and was visible only from the Warder's tower, which rose out of the centre of the buildings. Westward of the tower stood the church which was accessible by cloistered passages connected with the principal buildings by which it was surrounded.

In the years 1832 and 1833, Charles Chaplin, Esq., of Blankney, placed some workmen under my direction for the purpose of excavating the foundations which had been undis-

in the minds of the inhabitants, that it has been faithfully transmitted from father to son in every generation; and even now, at the distance of more than a century and a half from the time when the disturbances occurred, which excited this superstitious feeling—in the face of all the aids which reading and superior intelligence afford towards the extirpation of such groundless fancies, it still exists in the village in all its primitive force; and few of the rustic inhabitants possess sufficient courage to pass down the old avenue of trees, which mark the site of the dreaded building, after a certain hour in the evening. A narrative of the above disturbances is given by Dr. Moore, in his "Continuation of Remarkable and true Stories of Apparitions and Witchcraft," published in Glanvil. It appears, however, pretty clear that the annoyances which the family received in the reign of Charles II., were occasioned by a loyal warlock, who followed the occupation of a cobbler, to punish Mr. York for receiving into his family one of the ejected Puritan ministers.

⁵⁷ The Preceptory of Temple Bruer was founded in the 12th century, by Matilda de Cauz, or by the first William d'Essheby, for the testimonies in favour of both these claimants are very conflicting and uncertain. The latter, however, was one of its early benefactors; as was also Robert de Everingham, whose ancestor had succeeded to considerable property in this neighbourhood, by marriage with one of the daughters and co-heirs of Geoffery Alselin; which he himself had further augmented by marriage with the granddaughter and heir of the above Matilda de Cauz. Great improvements were soon introduced on the estates with which the Temple had been endowed. Buildings rapidly arose and spread over the barren waste; a circular church was built on the model of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, with a tower towards the east; and a town rose rapidly on the extended heath. Royal charters were obtained for a weekly market, which was held first on a Thursday, and subsequently on Wednesday; and an annual fair in the month of May. (Rot. Chart. 43 Hen. III. m. 4., for "maner' mercat' et feria.") And the disorders which preceded the reign of Edw. I., made a patent necessary for fortifying the exterior gate of the temple. (Rot. Pat. 34 Edw. I., "de kernellanda magna porta apud manerium de la Breuer.") The situation of this gate is still pointed out by two mounds where the flanking towers stood; and they go by the name of the "Bar Gates" to this day.

turbed on the north and west of the tower. The first excavation was made at the tower, as I confidently expected to find a vault in that situation, because the floor of the lower story is elevated five feet above the ancient surface of the ground. Whatever space might formerly have existed here, it had been filled in; but we came to a narrow subterranean passage, which appeared to take its rise in this vault, and issuing under the north door by a winding direction eastward, passed on to the buildings in that quarter, the very foundations of which have disappeared. The walls of this passage are coated with plaister.⁵⁸

In our researches on the site of the church, we discovered in a perfect state the ancient circular plinth and four feet of wall, but buried under a vast accumulation of rough and squared stones, a large number of them handsomely carved and polished. Norman columns and capitals; zig-zag and other mouldings,⁴⁹ earth and cement, and the tangled roots of large trees which grew amongst the foundations.

Heu, lapidum veneranda strues!

The circular church is fifty-two feet in diameter within; and appears to have been supported by a peristyle of eight cylindrical columns, with massive bases and capitals, from which sprang a series of circular arches profusely ornamented with bold zig-zags and other Norman enrichments; occupying, together with the aisle or space thus formed, exactly one half of the diameter. The outer face of the plinth which supports

⁵⁸ I am told that another passage exists in its primitive state. It is described as being formed of brick; about 4 feet in diameter and 6 in height, and arched over; perfectly clean and dry, and of sufficient capacity to admit a single person. It runs in a north-westerly direction, and is said traditionally to reach as far as Wellingore, a distance of two miles, but this is scarcely probable; although about six and thirty years ago it was opened and explored; and one of the workmen proceeded in with a candle to a considerable distance, until fear compelled him to return, after an expedition of more than an hour. We attempted to find the entrance of this passage, from the recollection of those who saw it at the above period, but without success.

⁵⁹ These beautiful details of the original building, consisting of most of the varieties of Norman enrichments, were soon scattered over the Temple yard in great profusion; and the spectator, possessing any portion of antiquarian feelings, on viewing these relics, would be unable to repress the train of reflection arising in his mind, on the primitive sanctity of the place, the peculiar order of men who were its inmates, and the utter desecration to which it was ultimately consigned at the final dissolution of the military order to which it belonged.

these columns is the segment of a circle, and measures four feet six inches; while the inner face is only three feet and a half, and the circular impost at the base of the column is three feet two and a half inches in diameter, and the column itself three feet two inches. A portion of the aisle on the north side had been used as a private chapel; in which were a tomb, an altar and a stone bench for the officiating priest. On the west was the principal door of entrance, with an ascent of stone steps, and a magnificent porch, the foundations of which remain perfect; and in the floor are two coffin-shaped stones, one plain, and the other charged with a cross botony fitchée in relief. No interments, however, were found beneath them. A communication was formed between the church and the lower story of the tower by means of cloisters; and this small apartment, which could have admitted but few persons, as it is only 17 feet square, was fitted up for performance of high mass, and was probably used as a choir or chancel. Inserted in the wall, on the east side of the south window, are a pair of arches springing from cylinders with foliated capitals, and surmounted by a crocketed canopy, which contain a piscina. On the other side of the window are two stone stalls to correspond; and in the west wall is a beautiful arcade of 5 massive retiring arches, handsomely finished with a rich and tasteful display of the torus moulding, now much dilapidated, and supported on cylinders, having capitals ornamented with the trefoil leaf. Under each of these arches is a stone seat.

This tower owes its preservation to the taste and good feeling of Charles Chaplin, Esq., of Blankney, who has furnished it with a new roof and otherwise effectually secured it against further dilapidations.⁶⁰ It has four stages separated by string-courses, and stands on a massive basement, to which its preservation amidst the wreck of the main buildings may be in some degree attributed. The east side has a lancet window, in each of the second and third stories; and in the south, a large window of three lights trefoil under a pointed

⁶⁰ It was granted 33 Hen. VIII. to Charles, Duke of Suffolk; being valued according to Dugdale at £184 6s. 8d., and according to Speed at £195 2s. 2½d. In 1628 the manor was in possession of the Earl of Dorset, and he granted it to Richard Brownlow, of Belton, Esq., whose descendant Sir John Brownlow dying without issue male, his estates were divided amongst his five daughters and co-heirs intail, and the estates of which Temple Bruer formed a part, fell by lot to his second daughter Alice, who married the Lord Guilford; and the deed of settlement is dated 23 April, 1707. From Lord Guilford the manor of Temple Bruer passed by purchase to Thomas Chaplin, Esq., of Blankney.

arch and dripstone resting on blank shields; above this is a plain circular-headed window, and the upper story containing a square on each face. In the north face of the tower is an ancient doorway, with a circular arch over a large transom stone, placed as if intended to aid the arch in support of the superincumbent pressure; and on this account it is conjectured by King⁶¹ to be of Saxon workmanship; but it is now walled up, and to the eastward are a pair of small arches in the wall. At the north-west angle is a clustered column, from which a groined roof has evidently sprung, and about the centre of this face, at the same elevation, a bracket or impost remains, which has probably been inserted for the same purpose. At the north-west angle of the tower within, is a capacious stone staircase much worn, which mounts to the rooms in the second and third stories, as well as to the battlements.

Over the cloisters above-mentioned were dormitories, which appear to have been enlarged from their original dimensions at some subsequent period, probably when the establishment was transferred to the Hospitallers, the older works having evidently been removed to make way for the more recent; for there appear marks in the tower indicative of two separate roofs, the one a pitch roof, the other shelving; and both of a date more modern than the tower itself, as is probable from the existence of an original window in this face, across which the added roof has taken its course, so as to divide it into two unequal portions; the lower part being included in the chamber over the cloisters.

On the floor at the east end of the church was an encaustic pavement, and several glazed tiles have been thrown out, of diversified shapes and colours: some are triangular, some square, and others oblong; and they were doubtless laid in such a manner as to compose some harmonious pattern. Beneath the church and tower was a perfect labyrinth of vaults and dungeons, and intricate passages, arched over with stone, branches of which run under the doors of the church and tower, and below the pavement of the cloisters.⁶²

⁶¹ Mun. Ant. vol. 3, p. 253, plate 37.

⁶² Some of these vaults were appropriated to purposes that it is revolting to allude to. In one of them a niche or cell was discovered, which had been carefully walled up; and within it the skeleton of a man, who appears to have died in a sitting posture, for his head and arms were found hanging between the legs, and the back bowed forward. Immuring was not an uncommon punishment in these places. An instance of it was

The church-yard or cemetery was on the north side of the west porch, and the graves were placed in lines round the outside of the building. They are very numerous, and those which were unavoidably opened by the process of excavation, contained skeletons, but no relics of coffins. The bottom of the grave was the surface of the lime-stone rock, the sides were lined with flat stones taken from the neighbouring quarry, and the whole was covered down with a rough stone of greater dimensions. They were in fact legitimate kistvaens.⁶³ In these graves were found arrow-heads of iron, small ornamental brass buckles, and an instrument resembling the blade of a dagger, all corroded with the rust of time and damp; several silver coins of the early Edwards and Henrys, one of Hen. VIII., and another of Elizabeth; some Roman copper coins, one of which is a Theodosius, with several Nuremburgh and Lombardic tokens; a gold ring set with emeralds; the bead of a rosary

discovered a century back, in one of the walls of Thornton Abbey, in this County; and Sir Walter Scott has drawn a thrilling picture of such an occurrence, in his beautiful poem of *Marmion*, canto XI. Another skeleton of an aged man was found in these dungeons, with only one tooth in his head. His body seems to have been thrown down without order or decency, for he lay doubled up; and in the fore part of his skull were two holes, which had evidently been produced by violence. In a corner of one of these vaults, many plain indications of burning exists. The wall stones have assumed the colour of brick, and great quantities of cinders mixed with human skulls and bones; all of which had been submitted to the operation of fire, and some of them perfectly calcined. This horrible cavern had also been closed up with masonry. Underneath the cloisters, between the church and tower, many human bones were discovered, which appear to have been thrown together in the utmost confusion, and lying in different strata, some deep and others very near the surface; amongst which were the skeleton of a very young child, and the skull of an adult, with a round hole in the upper part, into which the end of the little finger might be inserted, and which was probably the cause of death. Near these interments was a vast mass of burnt matter of various descriptions; and the fire had been so fierce, that the external surface of a massive cylindrical column, which was discovered near, is completely cinerated. Several large square stones were taken up with iron rings attached; and altogether, the ruins exhibit woful symptoms of crime and unfair dealing. We can scarcely forbear entertaining the opinion that these are the crumbling remains of unhappy persons, who had been confined in the dungeons of the preceptory; for the Templars and their successors were always in feud with their neighbours, and would not be very likely to remit, what they might conceive to be the merited punishment of delinquency.

⁶³ This was their simple and uniform method of interment; illustrating a remark of M. Paris, who observes that "the monks were wrapped in cloth, and so buried." It appears probable, however, that the knights of Temple Bruer were interred in the garments which they wore when living, for vestiges of clothing have been found with the bones.

made of ebony; a small bell, which was probably fixed, with many others of the same kind, according to the custom of the time, to one of the knight's horse furniture.⁶⁴ We also took up an antique Sheffield thwittle of great beauty with an ornamented haft, and a blade inlaid with silver in elegant devices, both on the sides and back, which latter is of great thickness; and two large keys of curious construction, the one plated with silver, the other with gold.

On the south side of the porch are several small rooms and narrow passages, which adjoined the church-wall; and these appear to have been offices, for one of the rooms which measures 14 by $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet, was filled with pure lime. The walls of this part of the buildings are uniformly $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in thickness, while those of the church and porch are more than 4 feet; and the latter are built of stone, rough as when taken from the quarry, and entirely coated with plaister inside and out, except the plinth, which is handsomely squared and moulded.

When the remains of the Temple were visited in the 17th century, by that indefatigable antiquary Gervase Hollis, it contained several armorial windows. He describes the shields of the noble families of Deincourt, Cromwell, Tateshall, Ufford, Beke, Willoughby, Mowbray, Beaumont, Bardolf, Cantelupe, La Warre, Welles, Zouch, Grey, Savile, and others to which no names are attached; and he was only just in time to place them on record, before Oliver Cromwell planted his cannon on the neighbouring hills to the west, battered down a great part of the church, and pierced the tower with his balls, leaving an aperture as a memento of his presence, to which tradition still attaches his name.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Vincent de Beauvais accuses the knights Templars of thus decorating their harness; *campanulas infixas magnum emittentes sonitum*.

⁶⁵ It appears that when this was done, the soldiers rushed forward to complete the scene of devastation, by destroying every vestige of ornament which might remain. They dug a hole within the consecrated wall in the north, and lighting a fire with the beams and rafters which had been dislodged from the roof, they tore out of the windows, and, amidst shouts of savage triumph, as may be supposed, threw them into the fire, gloating over the work until they were all melted into a solid mass. Then filling in the hole with stones and rubbish, they left it in that state to perish in everlasting oblivion. But their expectations have not been realized; for Oct. 31st, 1832, the mass of melted lead, with lumps of vitrified glass mixed with calcined stones, charred wood and ashes, was discovered and taken out in my presence. About half a yard below the site of this horrid feat, we found an interment. The skeleton was perfect, and lay,

From a minute inspection of the remains, I should not be inclined to praise the magnificence of the edifice as a whole, though it had its peculiar enrichments, as may be evidenced by the numerous carved stones which have been excavated. The outer wall of the church was rude though massive. It is, however, venerable for its high antiquity; and in extent, the Temple was stupendous;⁶⁶ for these proud ecclesiastical warriors required considerable room for the number of domestics which were found necessary to support their state and dignity. In addition to the usual monastic functionaries or obedientarii, the house at Temple Bruer was regulated by the state officers, which distinguished a baronial castle. A numerous train of retainers⁶⁷ was entertained, who were always ready to execute the will of the Superiour; and his fortified house was provided with every requisite to repel an assailant. It did not often happen that an attack was made on these military recluses, for being brought up to the use of arms, and their courage and tact having been often proved in the field of battle, they established for themselves a formidable character; and their vindictive spirit and haughty demeanour were an earnest of a dreadful retaliation to their enemies.

The staircase in the tower was partly intended as a means of access to the upper stories, and partly for mounting to

as usual, with its feet pointing towards the east. The skull small and the teeth delicate, induce a belief that it was a female; and if so, it was probably the remains of Dorothy, the wife of Roger Roleton, who died in the month of January, 1529, and was buried in the north aisle of this church, under a tomb, with arms quarterly and an impalement as follows;—

1 and 4. Party per fess gu. and ar. a lion passant in chief of the second; in base a cinquefoil pierced az.

2 and 3. A chevron between ten martlets sa. Impaling, ar. ten torteauxes, a label of 3 points az. Roleton and Babington.

If the above conjecture be correct, the atrocity of the conflagration is greatly increased, from the circumstance of its having been kindled in the grave of this lady, which the fanatics had probably broken open in search of treasure.

⁶⁶ In the course of investigations which I made amongst the ruins during the years 1832 and 1833, I discovered foundations of buildings in every part of the area inclosed within a space of a quarter of a mile square.

⁶⁷ The numbers may be further evidenced by the consumption of malt liquor, which must have been enormous, as they had breweries in constant operation at Blankney, Metherringham, Scopwick, Kirkby, Billingham, and Timberland; and the vaults underneath their premises are sufficient to show that they lacked not conveniences for its disposal.

the battlements. This was the warder's station, and accordingly, we find it furnished with loop holes at every gradation of the ascent, all, of course, pointing towards the only avenue by which the Temple was accessible from Hermen Street, then the direct road from the metropolis, and almost the only one which connected these parts with every district in England.⁶⁸ This avenue, winding its way through a beautiful valley, terminated at the entrance of the Temple, which was carefully fortified with gate and portcullis.⁶⁹

The reflections which arise in the mind on a view of this portion of the precinct, from the most elevated part of the warder's tower, are highly gratifying. The spectator might almost fancy he beheld the

“Christian host in its pride and power”

returning from the Holy Land, to change their sword and helmet for the monk's cowl, and the steel and corslet for the simple white robe decorated with the symbol of their order. He might, in imagination, hear the clank of armour respond to the shrill clarions' sound, while spears are glancing and pennons waving, emblazoned with many a noble device, in which the bright Red Cross⁷⁰ shone with distinguished lustre,

“And their plumes to the glad wind float,”

as the warriors issued through the portal in stern and solemn array, met by their brethren of the Temple, in procession, bareheaded, the emblem of their salvation elevated in the air, to conduct the warriors to the holy altar, that,

“The mass might be sung and the bells might be rung.”

⁶⁸ Such a tower was attached to every knightly residence, whether civil or ecclesiastical. It is referred to in the beautiful poem of the Red Cross Knight.

The warder looked from his tower on high,
As far as he could see ;
I see a bold knight and by his red cross
He comes from the East country, &c.
Then loud the warder blew his horn, &c.

⁶⁹ The place is still marked by two high mounds called the Bar Gates, that contain the remains of the two embattled towers, by which the entrance gate was flanked and protected under the provisions of a licence of 34 Edw. I.

⁷⁰ “Beau Seant was the name of the Templar's banner, which was half black, half white, to intimate, it is said, that they were candid and fair towards christians, but black and terrible towards infidels.” (Ivanhoe, Cabinet Edit. Note on vol. 1, p. 187.)

In addition to his conveniences at the Temple, the preceptor had a Lodge in Scopwick field;⁷¹ and at a distance of not more than half a mile westward, a spacious Grange, called St. Thomas's Grange, which was situated about a quarter of a mile eastward of Hermen Street, and almost opposite to the present Green Man Inn.⁷² It consisted of a large house and offices, a chapel and cemetery protected by a high mound, and subsequently a stone wall, which enclosed a space of about ten acres of land.⁷³ Here this potent chief retired for privacy and seclusion when it suited his convenience, but with an establishment equal to that of any of the neighbouring feudal proprietors, with whom he lived on terms of intimacy and

⁷¹ These lodges are of considerable antiquity. Thus the lodge at Scopwick derives its origin from a grant made so early as the reign of Hen. II., by John Deincourt, Lord of Blankney, to the Knights of Temple Bruer, whom he enfeoffed with two carucates or 240 acres of land in Scopwick field, adjoining their own territories, and a bercary or Lodge for the residence of their shepherds. This was a most important and valuable gift to the Templars, as it included folds, pens, wash-pits, and every other necessary appendage to a sheep farm. Here the shepherds erected mud houses for shelter in the day time from the sun or rain, and at night folded their sheep upon the land, and retired to repose at the lodge. The same system prevailed down to a very recent period, and it is a remarkable fact, that though these folds, &c., were only fenced by banks of earth, they remained entire at the end of 600 years after the grant was made, and were only demolished by agricultural improvements subsequently to the inclosure.

⁷² The Templars had another Grange at Wellingore, as appears from the following extract of a rental made 32 Hen. VIII.—“*Necnon firma scitus cujusda Grangiæ vocatæ, Wellingore Grange, cum-acris terræ arrabilis, et xxij acras prati jacentes infra parochiam de Wellingore; ac xx acris prati jacentes in par' de Welbourne; et firma x acras prati prout jacet infra parochiam de Asshebyj li. os. od.*”

⁷³ This Grange was ultimately taken down about 30 years ago, and so extensive were the buildings, that, as the tenant informs me, thousands of loads of stone have been removed from the foundations only, and applied to the repairs of the adjacent turnpike-road; and during the excavations for this purpose, the workmen found parts of painted windows, the lead and glass combined as when in actual use; carved stones; human bones and kistvaens or vaults made of stone 7 feet long by 3 feet wide, which could have had no other use than for interment. Near this Grange was found, some years ago, the official seal of Henry, Earl of Derby, who was descended from a younger son of Hen. III. He was created Earl of Derby before the decease of his father; at whose death, A. D. 1345, he succeeded to the title of Duke of Lancaster and became High Steward of England. The seal is of brass and of large size. The preceptor had a warren house, near the Grange, which had a subterranean vault beneath it, and the place where it stood is at present indicated by a willow tree, which, according to tradition, grew originally “out of the priors’ oven.”

friendship, while they continued in his good graces, by paying him the expected tribute of deference and respect as combining in his own person, the two high distinctions of a baron and a dignified churchman, and enjoying the privilege of exacting homage at the marriage of a tenant's daughter, which could not be performed without his consent. And it is recorded that "being all men of birth, and educated according to the custom of that age, without any tincture of letters, they scorned the ignoble occupation of a monastic life, and passed their time wholly in the fashionable amusements of hunting, gallantry, and the pleasures of the the table."

The priory of Catley⁷⁴ was dissolved in 1540 and granted in the next year to Robert Carr, of Sleaford, from whom the property passed to the Earl of Bristol, by marriage with the daughter and heir. The site exhibits, at present, immense masses of foundations, over which time has spread its mantle of green, covering a space of four or five acres of land, northward of which are two tumuli of moderate dimensions but beautifully formed.⁷⁵ The buildings were extensive, compre-

⁷⁴ The gross annual value of its possessions was estimated by Speed at £38 13s. 8d.; and the clear value by Dugdale at £33 18s. 6d.; while in the ecclesiastica Taxatio of Pope Nicholas the amount is £34 6s. 5d., arising as follows.

	£.	s.	d.
In Lincoln.....	0	10	0
Grantham	0	2	5
Langhoe and Boby ..	9	1	8
Holland	0	2	0
Sleaford	10	6	4
Belteslaw	0	16	0
Aslachoe	9	11	4
Lawres	3	10	4
Framland.....	0	6	5

⁷⁵ Concerning other tumuli connected with this monastery Dr. Yerburgh thus expresses himself. (Hist. Sleaf. p. 165.) "In one of them in Walcot commons, at the end of a close called Catley, where the priory once stood, was found in the year 1817, a wooden coffin, but almost wholly decayed, of more than 6 feet in length, containing the bones of a human body; likewise in the same place was found a vessel or urn with brass handles, but which was broken in digging up. In another tumulus, levelled in the same year and in the same field, were found several coffins, which appeared to lie in a triangular form, and from the circumstance of there being some small as well as large ones, it is conjectured to have contained a whole family. These lay on a level with the adjacent lands, and the tumuli were composed of a light clay."

hending the priory, offices, residence of dependants, chapel,⁷⁶ &c., and they were erected in the Norman style of architecture, for while digging a trench in the summer of 1833, part of a cylindrical column was taken up, with some carved stones indicative of that period.⁷⁷ The abbey was built on an elevated site in the midst of a flat country. The land all round it is peculiarly low, and at that period when the outfalls for the fresh water became obstructed, and the fens received and retained the surplus of the high country drainage, it must have been entirely surrounded with water at certain seasons of the year.⁷⁸ The distant prospect, however, is very pleasing. The circle of the horizon seen over the wide waste of fen, appears a very paradise; where the mass of trees which look like a verdant forest, and spires which point to heaven, contribute to form a romantic amphitheatre, in which nature displays her diversified productions to advantage. The priory occupied a situation in the centre of a circle of religious houses. To the north and east, on the borders of the fen lay Bardney, Stixwold, Kirkstead, and Tattershall; four or five miles to the south were Kyme and Haverholm, and westward lay the preceptory of Temple Bruer; besides which the monastery of St. Catherine's, at Lincoln, had a Grange in Scopwick field, and the abbey of Kirkstead a vaccary at Mere Booths.

⁷⁶ I have the satisfaction of quoting once more from my friend's work. (Hist. Sleaf. p. 168) "About five and thirty years since, on removing some rammel or rubbish, was discovered, about 6 feet below the surface, what was supposed to have been the floor of the church of this priory, which appeared to have consisted of 3 aisles, having large stone slabs laid in the usual manner of our church floors or pavements. Some of the slabs were mutilated, and others had inscriptions upon them, one of which, with a cross down its centre, and Saxon (Lombardic?) capitals along its border, quite perfect, lay for several years exposed to the weather. This slab the occupier of the field had at length removed and put down in his kitchen as a hearth stone."

⁷⁷ At the same time one of those Nurenberg tokens which are so common all over the county of Lincoln, where excavations are made amongst the foundations of ancient buildings, was taken up. It is in excellent preservation, and bears on one side 3 crowns and 3 fleur de lis alternately round a central rose, with this legend, HANS. KRAVWINCKEL. IN. NVR.* and on the reverse the globe and cross, thus circumscribed GOTES. SEGEN. MACHT. REICH.*

⁷⁸ An impression of the common seal of this monastery is appended to the Deed of surrender. It is small and bears a Virgin and Child with a monk on his knees. Legend—S. PRIORATUS DE CATTELE.

The mansions that remain on the ancient demesne in this neighbourhood are Ashby, Aswardby, Blankney, Bloxholm, Culverthorpe, and Haverholm, which may be briefly noticed.

The manor-house at Ashby, like almost all ancient family mansions, ⁷⁹ has been built in a low situation, but being well encircled with an abundance of fine timber, maintains a respectable appearance though the house is going to decay. On the east side of the mansion, and immediately adjoining the lawn, is a fine lake of beautiful spring water, on the opposite side of which, near the brow of a gently sloping hill, stands a rural cottage, nearly concealed from the view by a small clump of trees, which produces an appearance of Italian scenery that is not common in this part of the country. The view from the church-yard is diversified and agreeable, and includes the noble tower of Boston church in the distance. The well planted domain of Mrs. Manners contributes greatly to the interest of the prospect; forming altogether a rich specimen of sylvan scenery, that presents to the mind such ideas of peace and happiness as are formed in the purity of early youth, when the bright world reflects nothing but joy, and the idea reposes on the simple luxury of bathing in the crystal stream, climbing the lofty mountain to watch the glory of the setting sun from its summit, or penetrating the deep recesses of the umbrageous forest to rifle a stockdove's nest, or gather the rich branches of ripe nuts from the prolific hazle;—and before the dreams of pleasure are dashed by care and distrust, which accompany an actual commerce with man.

⁷⁹ The manor of Ashby was part of the honor of Haya, and was held in the twelfth century by Jordan de Essheby of the Earl of Salisbury, and it passed into the family of De la Launde, by a marriage with Cecilia, the sister and heir; which family resided here in the reign of Hen. VII. The lordship was purchased by Edward King, of Long Melford, in Sussex, A. D. 1648, and his descendants still hold it.

Aswardby, the seat of the Whichcote family is a spacious modern-built mansion, and placed in an excellent situation for effect, on a spot where the London turnpike forms an angle. It is surrounded with a park that contains a great quantity of noble timber, the accumulated shade of centuries.⁸⁰ The following view will display the localities better than the most minute descriptions.



The house at Blankney,⁸¹ though it has been the subject of two confiscations, at the attainder of Lord Lovel by Hen. VII.,

⁸⁰ At the conquest Aswardby was in the soke of Falkingham, and belonged to Gilbert de Gaunt. In the reign of Edw. III., however, it is mentioned in the Patent Rolls as a manor belonging to the bishop of Lincoln; but subsequently we find it in possession of the Kyme family, from whom it passed, with their other property through those of the Umfraville and Tailbois. After the battle of Towton Sir William Tailbois was attainted and beheaded; and the manor of Aswardby was given 2 Edw. IV. to Sir Thomas Togg. It was afterwards restored to the heir of Tailbois, and passed into the family of Carre by marriage with Ann, daughter of Sir Gilbert Tailbois, and thence into the possession of Lord Hervey the ancestor of the present Earl of Bristol, who resided there about the beginning of the last century. It was sold by Lord Hervey to the present possessors.

⁸¹ In the 15th century the demesnes belonging to the Deincourts of Blankney, which had been held by them from the conquest, passed by a female to the family of Lovel, of Tichmersh, by virtue of a marriage of William Lord Lovel with Alice, sister and co-heir of William Deincourt, who died 1 Hen. VI. Lord Lovel had livery of the lands 2 Hen. VI., and died 16th June, 1459, leaving John, his son and heir, and Alice, his wife surviving. This property in common with all the vast possessions of the

and of Lord Widdrington in 1715,⁸² has not only had the good fortune to escape the general destruction of castles and manor-houses, which has taken place in this part of Lincolnshire, since the 15th century, but has received many accessions to its magnificence by successive occupiers. The family of Thorold ornamented one of the parlours, by newly panelling it in square compartments, each of which contained a shield carved in oak, the whole number being charged with all the quarterings of the family, and many other coats of Lincolnshire gentlemen. The late Mr. Chaplin gave the building a new front and attics, and modernized it according to the taste of the times in which he lived; the wainscoting of the armorial room was removed, and the valuable panels unfortunately have been lost.⁸³ The

house of Lovel, was confiscated to the crown, temp. Hen. VII. after the battle of Stoke-upon-Trent, in which Lord Lovel her grandson fought on the side of the rebels, who were defeated and great numbers drowned in the river. Lord Lovel, however, succeeded in swimming his horse over, and was never more heard of; but when the house of Minster Lovel, in Oxfordshire was pulled down, many years after, the skeleton of a man, richly dressed, is said to have been found in a vault, seated in a chair, with a table and mass-book before him. This was supposed to have been his Lordship, who having taken refuge there was by some accident, left to perish. The Blankney estates became the property of the family of Thorold by purchase, with whom they remained till the time of Charles I., when centring once more in a female they passed to William Widdrington, by marriage with Jane Mary, daughter and sole heir. He was created Lord of Blankney 19 Charles I.; but his descendant having taken part in the rebellion of 1715, was made prisoner at Preston, arraigned, found guilty of high treason, and lost the whole of his estates though his life was spared. The estates were sold to Thomas Chaplin, Esq., of Tathwell, by the commissioners of forfeited property, and the deed of transfer is dated 24th March, 1719.

⁸² The family at present in possession trace a collateral descent from Lord Widdrington; thus:—

Sir Thomas Widdrington, of Sherbourne		=	
Grange, Northumberland.			
Ursula	=	Thomas Winros Hickman, Earl of Plymouth.	
Lady Elizabeth	=	Sir Samuel Dashwood, Lord	
		Mayor of London.	
Elizabeth	=	Andrew Archer, Esq.	
Diana Archer	=	Thomas Chaplin, of	
		Blankney, Esq.	

⁸³ An old tradition existed at Blankney, that when Lord Widdrington was attainted, he endeavoured to secure all his moveable property, on the event of confiscation, which he truly anticipated, by directing it to be concealed in secret places; and amongst the rest it was believed that he

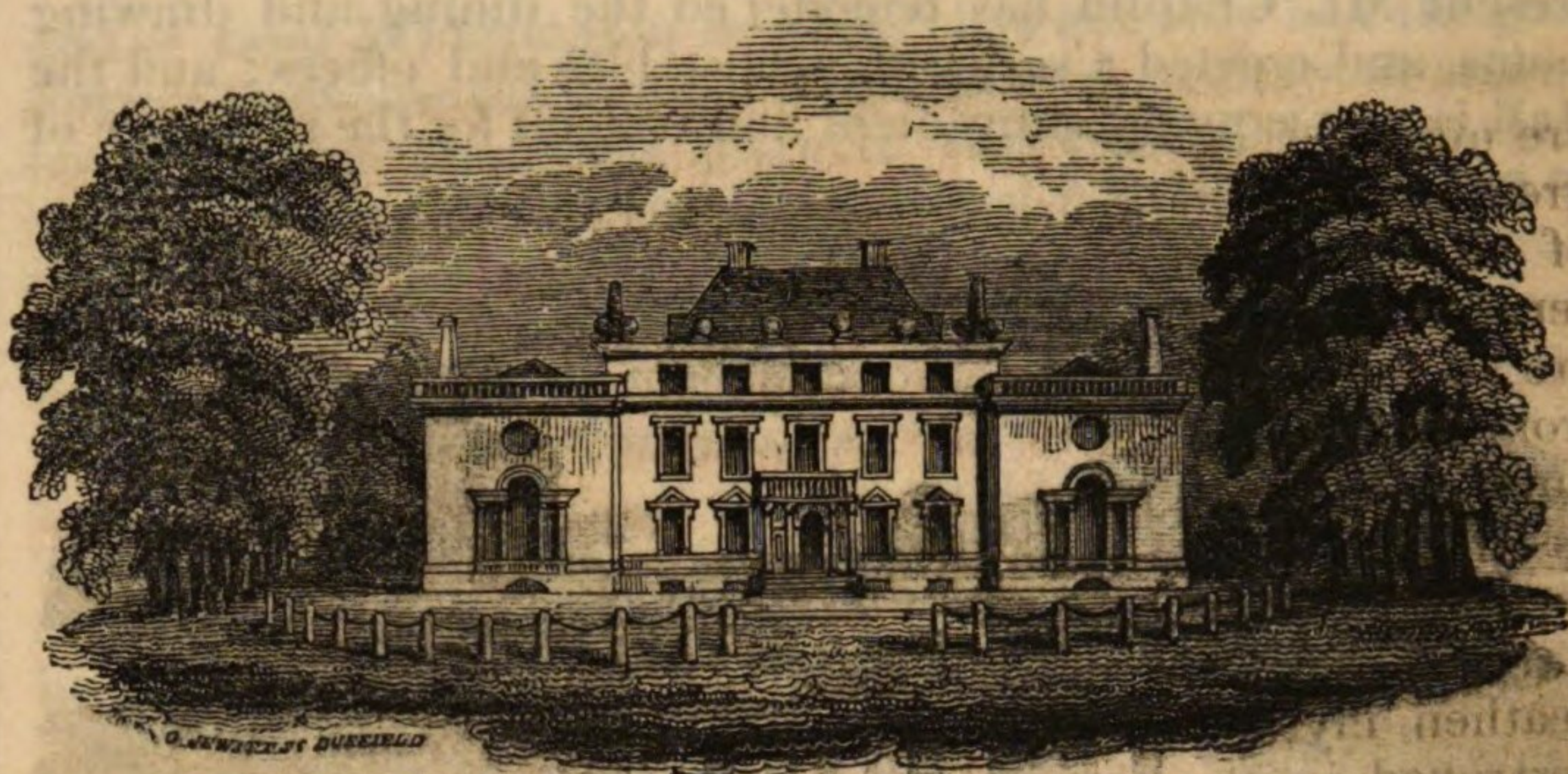
present Mr. Chaplin has remodelled the dining and drawing rooms, and erected a series of new stables and offices; and the Hall is now equally convenient and elegant for the residence of an opulent family.



The manor-house at Bloxholm is built of freestone, and of late years has undergone great alterations, repairs and improvements. The offices and stables were taken down and rebuilt, in the style of Elizabeth's reign, A. D. 1824. In the house are several fine portraits, and especially one of Lady Robert Manners,⁸⁴ by the late President of the Royal Academy. The Library is large, and contains a rich selection of topographical and genealogical works, with a valuable collection of engravings by the most eminent masters.

had deposited a large chest of plate in a vault beneath the great staircase in the Hall. The legend remained unheeded till the time when the late Mr. Chaplin had the workmen employed about his repairs; when he ordered them to open the vault and investigate the spot. They discovered a great oak chest under an arch of brick-work; but unfortunately it was empty, and the only articles found with it were a salt cellar of white metal and an iron ladle.

⁸⁴ At a very early period Robert de Gerlay held the manor of Bloxholm, which in the 14th century we find in the hands of Sir John Chamberlain, of Drax Chivaler; and it was transferred shortly afterwards through Sir Roger de la Warre and Eleanor his wife to the family of Bardolf. Subsequently it was the property of Thomas Lord Grelle, whose sister and heir being married to Sir John de la Warre, she bore him a son John, who inherited the manor of Bloxholm; he dying without issue, his brother Thomas became his heir, who 4 Hen. VI., bequeathed the manor to Sir



The above vignette⁸⁵ gives a correct representation of the south-front of Culverthorpe House.⁸⁶ "It is a fine mansion, built of an excellent stone, and carries with it the appearance of the seat of a family of some consequence; but the general comfort and convenience of the interior, appears to have been sacrificed for an entrance-hall, or vestibule, and a dress drawing room, both of which are very handsome; and that the size,

Reginald West. From him it passed to Richard Woolmer, Generosus, who held it in 1559. From an old survey of Bloxholm, made in 1632, by Jordan of Kegworth it appears that the lordship belonged to Nathanael Hubberd, and consisted of 14 dwelling houses besides the Hall. The next lord of the manor was — Thornton, Esq., and in 1719 at the death of the last representative of that family, it was purchased by Lucy, Duchess of Rutland for her son Lord Robert Manners; and at his decease in 1782 it descended to his children. First to his eldest son General Robert Manners, who died unmarried in 1823, then to George his second son who died in 1828 also unmarried, and lastly to Lucy his daughter.

⁸⁵ I have not seen Culverthorpe, and therefore describe it from Dr. Yerburch's Sleaford.

⁸⁶ The manor of Culverthorpe 12 Charles II., was in possession of John Newton, Esq., who was advanced to the dignity of a Baronet at the Restoration. This estate at that time was valued at £3000 per annum. He died in the year 1699 and was buried in Bitton church, Gloustershire. The estates then came to his son Sir John Newton, and at his death to Sir Michael Newton, who became possessed of a large estate by the death of his maternal uncle Sir Michael Warton, of Beverley Parks, Yorkshire. He dying without issue, the inheritance reverted to his sister Susanna, the wife of William Eyre Archer, Esq., and descended to their son Michael, who assumed the name of Newton; but having no issue, it came to his sisters, and from them to the present possessor, Mrs. Houblon Newton.

situation, and height of the family apartments, some of which are hung with tapestry, were but a minor consideration. In the great drawing-room are several portraits of various members of the Newton family; and a large and curious painting representing the same family, (for we understand the figures are all portraits,) the dress of the ladies varying but a shade from that of the 'lords of the creation,' attended by hounds, huntsmen, and a ponderous family coach drawn by six horses, assembled on the lawn apparently with the intention of proceeding to the chase. The ceiling and walls of the principal staircase were formerly painted with figures, &c., from the heathen mythology, but those on the walls were completely destroyed in the time of the last occupant, by painting the whole of them a plain colour. Extensive walled gardens, with a large quantity of fine old timber, and a beautiful lake covering about 14 acres, give a decided character of respectability to this house." The last male descendant of the Newtons died here in 1803; and the house after remaining 20 years without a tenant, became the residence of its present occupier, Henry Handley, Esq., M. P.

Haverholm Priory the seat of Earl Winchelsea is a new erection on the site of the old monastery,⁸⁷ by the late Sir Jenison Gordon, Bart., and bears the characteristics of its former use in the arched windows, turrets, wide passages, and want of comfort and convenience, which are so much more completely furnished by the practice of modern domestic architecture.

In primitive times the south side of every church-yard contained a column placed on a basement or pedestal, having on the summit a Cross,⁸⁸ which was frequently decorated on one face with a figure of the Saviour crucified; and on the other, the Virgin and Child. Before these holy emblems the worshipper used to bend his knee and offer up his prayers, not only for himself, but also for his family and friends, living or dead; and the nearer to this cross a corpse could be interred,⁸⁹ so much the sooner, it was confidently believed, would the soul be released from purgatory.

⁸⁷ At the dissolution, this religious house was granted to Edward Lord Clinton, being worth £70 15s. 10½d. per annum according to Dugdale, and £88 5s. 5d. according to Speed, although in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas some centuries before it was valued at £106 17s. 10½d. Since

There are many stump crosses in the neighbourhood of Sleaford besides those which are found in the church-yards. Some were situated in the streets; others in the fields and highways; and these according to their locality, were market crosses,⁹⁰ as at Helpringham, Ewerby, &c., or land marks,⁹¹ as at Skredington; but none are perfect except that at Digby, and the upper part of this is modern, for it was destroyed, along with the rest, when the injunction of Bishop Horne was promulgated at his visitation in 1571; that "all Images of the Trinity in glass windows or other places of the church be put out and extinguished, together with *the Stone Cross in the church-yards.*"⁹² This Cross was set up at the point where four roads met leading to religious establishments, viz., to the Cathedral at Lincoln—to Catley—to Temple Breur—and to Haverholm Priory. The shaft is about 16 feet long, half of

the above period the manor has passed through the families of Abdy, Cane, Whichcote, Thorold, Shaw, and Gordon. The latter dying without issue in the year 1830, bequeathed it, along with those of Ruskington and Evedon to the Earl of Winchelsea, the present possessor. The seal appended to the surrender of this monastery, now in the Augmentation Office, is unusually small, but the device is sufficiently distinct to enable us to discover two human figures seated under a gothic canopy; and beneath their feet, under a circular arch, a monk in the attitude of prayer. Another seal of this house was oval, and bore a priest performing mass with this inscription, Sigill. Prioris de Haverholm.

⁸⁸ The christian writers, Justin, Minucius Felix, Tertullian, Jerom, and Maximus of Turin, have investigated with tolerable success, the figure or likeness of a Cross in almost every object of nature or art; in the intersection of the meridian and equator, the human face, a bird flying, a man swimming, a mast and yard, a plough, a standard, &c. (See Lipsius de Cruce, l. 1. c. 9.)

⁸⁹ This constitutes one weighty reason why the south side of the church yard is found to contain the greatest number of interments, for individuals had a solemn dread of being buried in the north, *where there was no Cross.*

⁹⁰ Britton on Stone Crosses, passim.

⁹¹ Du Cange in loc. Crosses were erected 14 Rich. II., as land marks to define the boundaries between Kesteven and Holland. (Dugd. Imbank. p. 197.)

⁹² In the short reign of Mary, preceding the above date, the crosses had been restored both in the church and church-yard. And we find the following entry among the articles of visitation issued by Cardinal Pole. An. Reg. 6 Mary. 10. "Item, whether they have a Rood in their church of decent stature, with Marie and John and an image of the Patron of the church."

which is composed of a single stone, and the basement feet high.⁹³

Sleaford market cross is mentioned by Holles as bearing a shield charged with a saltire between four roundels and dated 1575. It stood, within the memory of man, nearly opposite the north-west door of the church, and was raised on several steps. The upper basement stone in which was fixed the shaft or pillar, was removed into the church about the year 1800. Round this cross the Corpus Procession moved; and here the miracle plays were acted and the mummeries performed.

There are several basements of church-yard crosses still remaining in the neighbourhood, but they are scarcely worthy of enumeration, except the tall shaft at Howel, which is five feet in height, standing on a basement of two feet. The lower part of the shaft is a square rising into an octagon. Inscriptions in church text were originally on each of the four sides, but time has so much obliterated them, that I have been unable to decipher their purport, except that on the west, which is a circle within a square, containing the monogram *ihc*.⁹⁴

⁹³ On days of rejoicing the parishioners held their celebrations at the cross, as appears from the following entries in an old account book of this parish.—

	£.	s.	d.
1713 Spent at ye rejoicing day at ye Crosse ..	0	10	6
For tobacco and pipes at ye Crosse	0	2	6
For gunpowder at yt day.....	0	2	0
Pd. to ye fiddler at yt time.....	0	0	4

⁹⁴ A christian writer in the reign of Constantine “affirms with the most perfect confidence, that in the night which preceded the last battle against Maxentius, Constantine was admonished in a dream to inscribe the shields of his soldiers with the celestial sign of God, *the sacred monogram* of the name of Christ, that he executed the commands of heaven, and that his valour and obedience were rewarded by the decisive victory of the Milvian Bridge. In the second civil war, Licinius felt and dreaded the power of a consecrated banner inscribed with the mysterious monogram, the sight of which, in the distress of battle, animated the soldiers of Constantine with an invincible enthusiasm, and scattered terror and dismay through the ranks of the adverse legions. The christian emperors who repeated the example of Constantine, displayed in all their military expeditions the standard of the cross;” (Gibbon. Rom. Emp. c. 20.) and the monogram was much esteemed in the christian world down to a comparatively recent period.

Mr. Oxford, in an article in the Gentleman's Magazine, says, "many circumstances, it is probable, contributed to the destruction of parochial and church-yard crosses in times subsequent to the Reformation. Dr. Rawlinson's M. S. Collections for Oxfordshire, in the Bodleian, mention a cross in Over Warton church-yard" made an upping-block by the parson." I am afraid this is not a solitary instance of the servile purposes to which these erections have been applied, that were once solemnly dedicated to the service of God.⁹⁵ The cross at Scopwick may yet be seen as a stepping-stone to the church gate; that at Ewerby has vanished from its dilapidated basement, to make room—O incredible dictu! for a pair of stocks. The basement of the cross which formerly stood in Rauceby church-yard, has been removed into a small paddock at Ous-thorp, belonging to Mr. Tindall. Another is laid as a stepping-stone and bridge on the road from Winkhill to Heckington, and the upper surface has been chiselled flat while the lower part retains its primitive octagonal form. About 50 years ago, the remains of two crosses existed at Leasingham. One stood in a pasture called the Nut Yard, where was a cross road. It was placed in an angle on the west side of the turnpike leading to Sleaford, opposite to the Roxham-lane, and near the south front of a house, now (1834) occupied by Lieut. Col. Watson. This was called the Butter Cross, having been formerly used by the vendors of that article in the market. The circular base and about five feet of the shaft were at that time standing, but the ornamented head had fallen a sacrifice to bigotry in some of its forms. The other, called the Bakers' Cross, was situated on a hill where four roads met north of the village. The basement stone still remains in a small inclosure near.

The last change which I shall notice constitutes a most important feature in the history of civilization, and in no district

⁹⁵ The puritans thought them superstitious; and it is true that the sign of the cross was in some cases converted to purposes of questionable tendency. In Scott's Discoverie of Witchcraft, p. 231, is the following recipe for making a charmed waistcoat, which was considered invulnerable. "On Christmas dai, at night a thread must be sponne of flax, by a little virgin girle, in the name of the divell; and it must be by her woven, and also wrought with the needle. In the breast, or fore-part thereof, must be made with needlework two heads; on the head at the right side, must be a hat and a long beard; the left head must have on a crown, and it must be so horrible that it maie resemble Belzebub; and on each side of the wastcote must be made a crosse."

has it been more rapid and effective. Previous to the middle of the 15th century, the only road of any consequence which intersected the heath, was the Hermen Street, which had been constructed by the Romans on a line previously struck out by their predecessors, the primitive inhabitants of the island,⁹⁶ and it leads, not from Sleaford, but from Ancaster to Lincoln; and as we are informed by a M. S. in the British Museum, "the litil old Strete ledyed from Lincoln to Sleaford of old time. And within time of remembrance, was used always for the right way between Lincoln and Sleaford, unto such time as the new way by Lyngo Grange was first tract and made by Bishop Anwick, (who held the See of Lincoln from 1436 to 1449) with his carriages and his stuff for his new beldyng his catell at Sleaford, and that then they toke and began fyrst to use it for the more streight and nerer way."⁹⁷ The materials used by the good bishop were probably of no account, for though the public turnpikes are now excellent, and it is only the cross country roads in some of the obscure villages that require amendment; yet a century ago this great thoroughfare to Town was absolutely impassable, and people are now living who remember seeing it horse-belly deep. Twenty years ago, as I myself recollect, the road from Boston to Sleaford was so heavy, even in the summer season, that wheel travelling was almost impracticable. A journey to London, even so recently as the beginning of the last century, was an undertaking of great difficulty and danger. "We who, in this age, are accustomed to roll along our hard and even roads at the rate of 8 or 9 miles an hour, can hardly imagine the inconveniences which beset our grandfathers when they had to undertake a journey—forcing their way through deep and miry lanes; fording swollen rivers; obliged to halt for days together when the waters were out; and then crawled along at the pace of 2 or 3 miles an hour, in constant fear of being set fast in some deep quagmire, of being overturned, breaking down, or swept away by a sudden inundation."⁹⁸ All carriage work at this period, was

⁹⁶ There is something majestic and sublime in this magnificent road, even at the present period. When I saw it for the first time above Temple Bruer I was greatly struck with its appearance. Unusually broad, straight, and wholly covered over with an even verdant turf, it conveyed a vast idea of the stupendous labours of those masters of the world, while its utter loneliness and desertion amidst the wide heath, now covered with the results of active tillage, for it was in the midst of harvest (1832) and dotted here and there with infant plantations and farmsteads, showed the worthlessness of the grandest designs of man; for this portion of the road is now almost useless.

⁹⁷ Peck's M. S. vol. 4, no. 4937. ⁹⁸ Quarterly Review, vol. 31, p. 356.

accomplished by the agency of pack-horses;⁹⁹ but now the roads are so perfect that travelling may be expeditiously accomplished by any of the usual methods. It is true that from Lincoln to Sleaford *by the towns*, they are necessarily dirty in the winter season; for the material of which they are composed being limestone, the frost operates on them like fire, and converts the summer dust into a substance, which being scraped and tempered is an excellent and cheap substitute for mortar, and is copiously used in the stone buildings which prevail on this line. Much, however, still remains to be done in the reparation of the fen roads, which are mostly impassable in the winter; and the best of them are heavy, being generally composed of sand. It is highly probable, however, that the time is not far distant when the fens will be intersected with good roads, and the communication rendered perfectly safe and pleasant.

⁹⁹ "The late Mr. Andrew Thompson, sen., told me," says Bannatyne, in his Scrap Book, as inserted in Dr. Cleland's Statistical Account of Glasgow, "that he and the late Mr. John Glassford went to London (from Glasgow) in the year 1739, and made the journey on horseback. Then there was no turnpike road till they came to Grantham, within a hundred and ten miles of London. Up to that point they travelled on a narrow causeway, with an unmade soft road on each side of it. They met from time to time strings of pack-horses, from thirty to forty in a gang, the mode by which goods seemed to be transported from one part of the country to another. The leading horse of the gang carried a bell to give warning to travellers coming in an opposite direction; and he said when they met these trains of horses, with packs across their backs, the causeway not affording room, they were obliged to make way for them, and plunge into the side road, out of which they sometimes found it difficult to get back again upon the causeway."

CHAP. 2.

HISTORY OF THE GUILD.

The Town of Sleaford, which is divided by its river into two parts, distinguished by the adjuncts New and Old, is of very great antiquity; and there is little doubt in my mind but New Sleaford, as a place of human habitation, was peopled at least as early as that part of the town on the south side of the river which is distinguished by the pre-nomen of Old.¹ Stukeley says it was a Roman town; I think it was British; and it is certain that the Ford² was crossed by a British³ or Roman road.⁴ This evidence, however, is not absolutely conclusive; because a few dwellings might have existed as well on the south as on the north side of the river, for the convenience

¹ The distinction is of very ancient date, for we find in existing records, Lafford Vetus used so early as the reign of Hen. III. (Rot. Hund. p. 245.) and it was probably imposed by the Romans.

² **ffordd** is a pure British word, signifying generally "a road or way." The Ford of Old Sleaford crossed the river a little to the east of Coggle-ford mill in the course of the ancient road, before it was made navigable, and was connected with the line of road along Eau lane, from the Boston to the Horncastle turnpikes, and had its name from being constructed of coggle stones by artificial means.

³ I will not take upon myself to pronounce whether the road passing from south to north from Sleaford to Lincoln, near the villages, be of British construction, because the principal tumuli which mark its course, exhibit only indications of British sepulture, about the time of the Romans; although some of the villages contain unequivocal traces of a much earlier occupancy.

⁴ The phrase "Old", when attached to a road, points out the direction of a Roman street; and hence Old Sleaford may have been so named, because at this point the Roman road formed an angle to cross the ford; which may also have been the origin of the name of Lord Hussey's House, viz. Old Place.

of travellers. My reasons for making them contemporary are derived from etymology. For instance; the name of the hamlet attached to New Sleaford is Haldingham; and Ald or Eald was a Saxon prefix to a Burgh or any thing else which had been in existence in times beyond their recollection.⁵ From which it may be justly inferred that the hamlet not only existed in their times,⁶ but was considered in the light of an ancient town by that people;⁷ and there is much probability in the conjecture that in Roman times a communication was formed from this point with the main branch of the Hermen Street, which it met at the place called Biard's Leap; a name that carries us back into the obscurity of the British period; and appears to intimate that it was constructed by the aboriginal natives⁸ at the same time with the roads themselves, as a convenient passage for the Bards, to attend their public assemblies of the country; for, as heralds, they were privileged persons, and entitled to admittance every where without scruple or suspicion.⁹

It is well known that at the time of the Domesday Survey, and for many centuries afterwards, the town of Sleaford was the property of the bishops of Lincoln; and there are many reasons for presuming that it was not merely the abode, but the favourite

⁵ Whittaker's Richmondshire, p. 206.

⁶ This may have been the origin of the name by which the hamlet was subsequently called, for when the Saxons became possessed of this settlement, finding here a small hamlet at the junction of two roads, like a key to the champagne country, they would very naturally give it the name of Ald-ing-ham, an ancient hamlet or dwelling in the meadows. It would be at first imposed without any design, and simply arise out of the circumstances and situation of the place: habit would confirm the appellation, and thus a permanent name would be acquired.

⁷ It may be remarked that if another etymology of this name be substituted, it will make very little difference to the theory in the text, for Hald-ing-ham, a habitation by certain *hanging stones*, implies the existence of a druidical stone temple; probably at Biard's Leap.

⁸ The Hermen Street, though usually termed a Roman road, was originally constructed by the Britons under Molmutius or Dunwallo Moluncius, who flourished A. M. 3529; and completed by Belinus his son, who, along with his colleague Brennus, succeeded in accomplishing the sack of Rome.

⁹ The name of Biard's Leap is but a corruption of **Beird Udapp** the cheerful path of the Bards; and this is further evidenced by the fact that the common fields of Haldingham retain their primitive Celtic name of Anna or **Annwn** which implies a deep marshy situation, corresponding exactly with the localities of the place.

residence of many successive prelates, from the strength and situation of its castle, for a bishop lived in all the splendour and security of a feudal baron; ¹⁰ and instances are not wanting to prove that they took an active part in all the civil disorders of the times, and led their retainers to battle in person.¹¹ His possessions extended to a great distance, and Sleaford ¹² was the medium or *ford* by which he was enabled to connect the different parts of his unwieldly diocese; and here, therefore, he built a castle. From hence he could communicate with his churches at Lincoln and St. Mary at Stow, as well as with his burgesses of Louth ¹³ and Newark; and with his tenants southward, at

¹⁰ The prelates of this age lived in great state, and affected peculiar ceremony at their meals. From what is recorded of ecclesiastical banquets elsewhere, we may form some idea how the bishop's table was kept in Sleaford castle. "The table of the abbot of St. Albans was elevated fifteen steps above the hall, and in serving his dinner, the monks at every fifth step performed a hymn. He dined alone at the middle of the table, to the sides of which guests of distinguished rank were admitted; and the monks, after their attendance on the abbot was over, sat down to tables at the sides of the hall, and were served with equal respect by the novices. The company was summoned by sound of trumpet, and the several courses were announced by a prelude of music." (Forsyth. Ant. Portf. Vol. 1. p. 259.)

¹¹ It is recorded of King Rich. I. that having taken a bishop prisoner in a skirmish and put him into fetters, the prelates complained to the pope, who desired Richard not to detain in prison his dear son in the faith. The King sent the pope the armour in which the bishop had been taken, with this message; we found him in this dress; see whether it be your son's coat or not. The pontiff was not behind hand in joke with Richard, but returned for answer; No, not my son's, but some imp of Mars, who may deliver him if he can; I will not interfere. (Forsyth. ut supra. Vol. 2. p. 154.) The pay of a bishop, in actual service, is thus noticed in an old MS. "To Thomas Hatfield, bishop of Durham, 6s. 8d. per day; 3 bannerets, 48 knights, 164 esquires, 81 archers on horseback."

¹² The name of Sleaford is derived from *Blaf* (Sax.) a Lord; and *Ford* a shallow water. The propriety of this etymology will be apparent when we consider that the bishop was the Lord of the burgh. According to Weever, (Fun. Mon. p. 590.) "Lord was wrote *Blaford* (H-Laford) and signified a person of dignity who *gave bread to the poor*;" referring in this case to the bishop, who imparted to the people the bread of life.

¹³ This opulent and respectable town, which derives its name from Luda, the name of a streamlet that meanders through the adjoining valley, was of considerable importance in the Saxon era; and though in the absence of authentic documents, we can pronounce nothing certain about its privileges before the Norman Conquest, yet at that period, and from the time of Edward the Confessor, it was possessed of a market and tolls; had its proportion of burgesses, who traded under the protection of the bishop, and toft holders; with 13 mills, a greater number than any other town in Lincolnshire could boast. The surrounding country was well wooded, and it had two annual fairs. (Rym. Foed. Syllab. no. 99, 14 E. IV.)

Heckington, Gosberton, &c. He had a market at Sleaford, and it is therefore highly probable that he would encourage the establishment of civil Guilds, for the protection and improvement of its property and emoluments, in the shape of tolls, and, as a superior dignitary of the Church, the religious fraternities would not be overlooked. Hence it may reasonably be conjectured that the Guild of the Holy Trinity,¹⁴ which attained to such eminence in Sleaford in after times, although the only document now in existence is dated no earlier than 1477, was instituted very soon after the conquest: and this presumption is increased by the silence of the Patent Rolls respecting it, although it possessed lands and other property to a considerable amount, which must have needed the King's Patent to convey to the brothers in mortmain. It should seem therefore to have been in existence before the commencement of the Patent Rolls, in the reign of John.

The public amusements of the people, in the middle ages, were considered so intimately connected with the peace and welfare of society, that they were placed under the protection of religious Guilds for the purpose of perpetuating their existence. It was conceived that if they should fall into disuse, the people, being bereft of their customary sources of relaxation, would employ their vacant time in schemes of mischief. An ancient MS. *Compotus Book*, in the possession of Dr. Yerburch, belonging to the above Guild, records this fact; it commences in the above year, and I subjoin an exact copy of the first entry.

Competus Johes Swynshed¹⁵ Aldyrman Willi Pynder et Ricardi ffranke¹⁶ camerareoz Gylde sancte tintatis anno dni millmo CCCCLXXvij

¹⁴ Appendix C.

¹⁵ Two individuals of the same name were benefactors to the abbey of Croyland, about ten years previous to the above date; viz. Simon Swynshed, who gave a fine cope and alb, with his own name enigmatically wrought on the breast, worth above £20; and William Swynshed who repaired the chapel of the Trinity, in the infirmary, which was ready to fall; leaded the roof, provided new benches, &c. for the Choir, and a tabernacle of the Trinity. It is highly probable that these persons were the relatives of the above mentioned John Swynshed, alderman of the Holy Trinity Guild, at Sleaford.

¹⁶ This individual belonged to a family of some consequence in the county. The principal stock was settled at Grimsby in the earliest period of the Norman dynasty; and an instance of undue influence within that borough, which one of the family practised in the reign of Hen. III., is

Md yat ye next Sondag aftyr ye fest of ye t'inte ye zer a for wretyn yat jon Swynshed Covntyd and delyuyd ye day a for sayd. A pon hys count to ye Town of Sleford & bredyr & systers of ye gyld of ye t'inte of savle scott¹⁷ to hym delyuyd be ye handys of jon Gylbert & Robert Wryght Sm iij vili xis ixob Of ye groych sume yt Remaynys in the charge of jon Gylberd —vi/i Also yr Remaynys in ye hand of jon Swynshed aldyrma of ye zer afor sayd iijli xjs ixob¹⁸

It the incese off the stoke.....iijli xviijs jd.

It of hold savlescott.....ijs

It of Neve broderod savlescott.... vili xjs ix d.

recorded in the Hundred Rolls; but the collateral branches resided in other parts of the county. A member of this family founded and endowed the priory of St. Augustine in Grimsby; and in the 14th century, William Franke, having rendered some considerable services to Isabella, Queen dowager of England, received many marks of royal favour. In the first year of his reign, King Edw. III committed to him the custody of the castle and bail of Lincoln. In 1336 the King rewarded him with a grant of estates in the soke of Beseby; and he was appointed High Sheriff of Lincolnshire in 1342. In the following century the heiress of the eldest branch married Sir Richard Tunstall, chamberlain to King Hen. VI., and she was buried at Grimsby, and had a splendid monument in the north aisle of St. James Church, with the following inscription; Hic jacet Dna Elizabetha Fundatrix istius loci filia et hæres Wilhelmi Fraunke militi quondam uxor Ricardi Tunstall militi et Camerarii Henrici sexti Angliæ quæ obiit...mensis...Aº dni Mº CCCCº XCIIIº cujus aiabus propietur dns Amen. "Upon the stone engraven," says Holles, "are she and hir sonne in their winding sheets; about the middle of the stone, two Escocheons; Tunstall's within the quarter, and her own paternall coat by itt.

S. 3 Combes argent.—TUNSTALL.

Vert. a saltier engrayled or. FRANCKE.

¹⁷ The saul-sceat, or the payment to the clergy on death, was a very general practice, even during the Anglo-Saxon period. No respectable person died or was buried without a handsome present to some branch or other of the ecclesiastical establishment. Nothing can more strongly express the importance and necessity of this custom, than that several of their Guilds seemed to have been formed chiefly with a view to provide a fund for this purpose. It appears in all wills. Thus Wynflod for a saulsceat gave to every one of the religious at the places she mentions, a mancus of gold; and to another place, half a pound's-worth of saulsceat. She adds a direction to her children that they will illuminate for her soul. (Turn. Angl. Sax. Vol. 4. p. 193.)

¹⁸ The names of the auditors are not mentioned in these accounts till two years later; and for the last twenty years preceding the dissolution, the Vicar of Sleaford regularly attended the meetings.

It new brodyrod¹⁹ xiijs.

It of legat vjs. iiijd.

It for malte sold be ye charm layns xviijs viijd.

Sm total iij xvii- li
 iijd. ob.²⁰

Thys ben ye pcels in expens don be ye sayd Aldyrma & hys Chomlayns.²¹

M—Fryst payd to ye prest vli vjs viijd.²²

It payd to ye dirige²³ xxd.

¹⁹ The new brotherhood, I should conjecture, were recently admitted members, who paid an entrance fee, and contributed a small annual sum towards defraying the current expenses of the fraternity. Whence the name, from *Gildare*, to contribute, or from the Saxon (*Gildan*) *solvo*, to pay. This was continued for a specified number of years, when they were admitted to the privileges of elder brethren. Each class had its own chamberlain, who delivered in his accounts before the auditors on the day of annual celebration, which, contrary to custom, was not uniform.

²⁰ The importance of this Guild may be estimated, not only from the fact that it was under the management of the principal people in the place, but from the amount of its annual income; for £80 a year at that period, was more than equal to £800 now; and the precedence which was assigned to it in all public amusements and processions. The Guilds at Boston, which at that time was one of the largest seaports in the kingdom, were none of them so valuable; the Guild of Corpus Christi there being valued at £32; that of the Virgin £24; and that of St. Peter and Paul £10. 3s. 4d. Hence it appears that the one Guild at Sleaford had a greater income than the three principal Guilds at Boston.

²¹ On the day of settling the annual accounts it was usual to chuse an Alderman and two Chamberlains for the ensuing year. These elections appear to have been very peaceably conducted, for the chamberlain of the elder brethren commonly succeeded to the office of Alderman, and the chamberlain of the younger brethren took his place.

²² The annual stipend to the priest was pretty uniform, and equal to the customary payment of a vicar or curate. His duties were incessant, for he had a daily mass to perform at one of the Altars in Sleaford church; but the record affords no clue for determining the locality of the altar; whether at the east or west end of the south aisle, or in the transept; for *piscinæ* remain in all these situations.

²³ The author of the Homily for repairing and keeping clean of churches, expresses great indignation against these observances. "What den of thieves the churches of England have been made by the blasphemous buying and selling the most precious body and blood of Christ in the mass, as the world was made to believe *at diriges*, at month's minds, at trentalls, in abbeyes and chantries; besides other horrible abuses which we now see and understand. All these abominations they that supply the room of Christ have cleansed and purged the churches of England of." It is remarkable, however, how the puritans of Cromwell's time degenerated into the contrary extreme during the prevalence of their hot zeal against all customs and ceremonies which they thought savoured of popery. Gunter in his *History*

It payd to ye prest for messe penys for ye bredyr dyssesyde yt zer..	<i>xd.</i>
It payd to ye mynstrels	<i>xiiij d.</i>
It payd to ye mynstrells of corpus day	<i>iiij d.</i>
It payd for the ryngyng of ye same day	<i>ij d.</i>
<i>Sm vli xs. xd.</i>	

It in expens don be the hands of ye Chavmlayns i al man
chargs *iiijli xiiij s. vjd. ob.*

The sume of the stoke althyngs covntyd & alovyd delyuyd
to ye hands of Willam Curwyn chosun for Aldyrman ye next
zer foloyng *iiijli xv s. iiij d.*

Sm totalis de claro iiij li. xv s. iiij d.

The brethren of the Guild possessed a house near the church,
which was called Guildhall or Church house. This situation
was convenient for them, as their business was to pray²⁴ as well

of Peterborough tells us that the soldiers of Capt. Beaumont, coming to Yaxley, "break open the church doors, p— in a font, and then baptised a horse or a mare; using the solemn words of baptism, and signing them with the sign of a cross." At Litchfield, the soldiers "demolished all the monuments, pulling down the curious carved work; battering in pieces the costly windows, and destroying the evidences and records belonging to that church. Which being done, they stalled their horses in the body of it; kept courts of guards in the cross aisles; broke up the pavement; polluted the quire with their excrements; every day hunted a cat with hounds through the church, delighting themselves in the echo from the goodly vaulted roof; and to add to their wickedness, brought a calf into it wrapped in linen, carried it to the font, sprinkled it with water and gave it a name in scorn and derision of the holy sacrament of Baptism; and at length carried away the communion plate and every thing of value." (Dugd. Short View. p. 559.)

²⁴ The objects of their union appear to have been that every hearth or family should pay a penny at Easter, and another on the death of any member of the Guild; which seems to have resembled our friendly societies, where the members make small stated payments, and are buried at the expense of the fund. Others were for God's love and their souls' need, holding meetings three times a year. Priests were appointed to sing a mass for their living friends, and another for their dead friends and every brother two psalms. At the death of every member six psalms were to be chanted, and every man at the pup-rope was to pay five pennies at the grave. There was much good fellowship connected with them, and at their meetings conviviality was not forgotten. (Turn. Angl. Sax. Vol. 4 p. 136.)

as eat. They consisted of an Alderman, Brethren, and Sisters, and the vicar as well as the principal persons in the town and neighbourhood, were enrolled amongst the members. They were empowered to hold lands, receive legacies, &c. They frequently met; but at the annual assembly they went to church, offered up their prayers for all the members of the society, whether living or dead; and concluded their business with a dinner. In the town of Sleaford were several minor guilds,²⁵ but the guild of the Holy Trinity had the supreme direction of them all. The members bestowed annual salaries on the poor, received travelling strangers, and did other acts of charity as far as their revenues allowed,²⁶ and at the decease of their eminent members they had an obit²⁷ or funeral solemnity performed while the corps stood in the church unburied. In some cases the obit was renewed at every anniversary of the person's death.²⁸ The chaplain of the Guild was a general director of

²⁵ There can be little doubt but Sleaford had many trade guilds, though no records are in existence to confirm the fact; for we find the merchants of Sleaford mentioned in documents of very high antiquity. The Hundred Rolls contain a charge against certain merchants of Old Sleaford, for the illicit exportation of wool in the reign of Hen. III. In the same reign we find these merchants claiming the exercise of some specific privileges in the City of Lincoln, which were secured to them by a royal patent; (Rot. Pat. 55 Hen. III. m. 6.) and tradition attributes the erection of the church to two Sleaford merchants in the thirteenth century.

²⁶ Cullum. Hist. Hawst. in Bib. Top. Brit. v. 5. p. 20.

²⁷ The expense of an obit was 2s. 2d. viz.—the parish priest 4d.; the chancel priest 3d.; the two clerks each 4d.; the choirister 3d.; the Sexton 2d.; the bellman 2d.; two tapers 2d.; oblation 2d. These obits were preserved sacred even at the time of the reformation; and especial provisos were made for their continuance in Royal Charters. Thus in a Charter granted to the borough of Boston 37 Hen. VIII and confirmed 1 Edw. VI. is the following clause: "No Alderman of any guild or fraternity within the church of St. Botolph in Boston by colour of these Letters Patent, shall withdraw or diminish any obits, obiquies, or other gifts whatsoever appointed to be done by the last wills of any persons; but shall maintain them according to the last wills of the donors, and according to the laws of England made and to be made."

²⁸ Mr. Watson in his History of Wisbeach has preserved a curious will of Robert Smith, dated 10th March, 1520, in which this service is especially provided for in the following clause:—"All these my Messes. and lands I gyffe to the Aldermen and Brethren of the gylde of the Holy Trinity, under this condition. I wyll that the Alderman and his Brethren shall every yere kepe myne obytt in the chapel of our blessed Lady, the day of anniversary, with seven priests and five clerks, gyving to the Vicar or his parish priest 8d.; to the schoolmaster 8d.; and the three brotherhood priestsyche of them 6d.; and two other prsts yche of them 4d.; and the trynitye clerk

all the religious ceremonies attending it, which was added to his duty of serving at the altar.²⁹

It is on record that there was much tippling at the periodical meetings of the brethren; ³⁰ and so early as the reign of Rich. II. the Guilds were even suspected of being nurseries of sedition; and on this account a serious intention was entertained of suppressing them. They escaped, however, and were only abolished at the general dissolution of monasteries, because they were considered to be founded in superstition. ³¹ The last regular entry in the Compotus Roll of Sleaford is dated

4d.; and yche of the five clerks 2d.; and to 30 chyldren and 40 poor men yche of them a 1d.; and these af'sd p'sons to be p'sent at my obytt, and to syng by note *placebo* and *dirige*; and in the mornyng next thay, betwixt 9 and 10 of the clocke, to syng masse of requiem, with the collect begynning with *Deus cuiq' summa spes n're redempcois*, with the secret and post communion of the same; praying for my soule, and for the soules of John and Agnes my father and mother, and all my ancesters soules, and all christn soules: also I will that the sexton have 2d.; and the two clerks for ringing 12d.; and at the said mass I wyll that the Alderman or his deputye, with the treasurers and two of his brethren shall offyr at the said mass. the Alderman to offyr 2d. and to have for his labour 4d.; and every of his four brethren to offyr 1d. and to have for his labour 2d." Then follow particular directions about the services.

²⁹ These articles are found amongst the Guild accounts;—

It for apeyre off cruetts to ye autyrxd.

It to ye clarkeiijs. iiijd.

³⁰ We are told that they even contrived to convert gluttony and drunkenness into religious ceremonies by the celebration of glutton masses. "These were celebrated five times a year, in honour of the Virgin Mary, in this manner. Early in the morning the people of the parish assembled in the church loaded with meats and drinks of all kinds. Mass being ended the feast began, in which the clergy and laity engaged with equal ardour. The church was turned into a tavern, a scene of riot and intemperance. The priests and people of different parishes entered into formal contests which should have the greatest glutton masses; i. e. which should devour the greatest quantities of meat and drink in honour of the Holy Virgin." (Forsyth. Ant. Portf. Vol. 1. page 225.) It will be borne in mind that at this period the church was not pewed.

³¹ "At that time by virtue of a Statute made for that purpose, an Inquisition or Survey was taken of all the religious Guilds and such like foundations, by proper persons in each county of England; the names of their founders, the state and yearly value of them were certified, and the rents or profits seized and perpetually vested in the crown." (Mad. Firm. Burgh. p. 26.) And the Act of Parliament authorised the commissioners to assign the lands and property towards endowing a Grammar School, or "such other godly intents and purposes as the same commissioners or two of them should appoint."

1545, of which the following is a copy; and it shews that a great alteration had taken place in the circumstances of this Guild before its dissolution. "At ye count of ye trinite gylde mayd ye viij day of Apryll in ye yere of ye rayn of King henry ye viij before maist' Thomas folkyngham maist Rob. Car. Rob. Butler Ric barkar henre Renoldson wth other. first Rob tymberland yong chaberland hath brought in ye nyv bretheron & ye bequests of ys yt be dede ijs. & jd. John plesans Old chamberleyn hath brought in for ye elder breyronne xxxs. And Ric Cart alderma of ye same gylde hathe brought in of ye incress of ye stoke xl vis. & for Nelson lands ijs. And so Ric Cart schall delyver to Ralfe Whyttull ij chalys ij brasse Potts a payr of cobhyrrons³² ij dosyn and a dysche of pevter." Hence it appears that the stock, contributions and payments were considerably reduced, though the principal persons in the place still continued at the head of the guild.³³ Two subsequent memorandums occur after the dissolution of the establishment; the one dated 1585, the other 1613. The latter one is thus worded:—"1613 memorandum payd by me Edward Rede by the commandment of Richard Dubeday & William Barrowe Churchwardens & Edward Huginge overseare for the pore the Sixt day of may the somme of iijs. iiijd. to Jhon Suttons wife for the nursinge of Elizabeth priestlay child for one month in the p'sents of John Awbrey." From this entry it appears that the remaining funds were now under the management of the churchwardens and overseers of the poor.

At this time Sleaford was a dark and dirty town.³⁴ The

³² These instruments were often enriched with gilding and carving, inlaid with gold and silver and enameled with flowers and other elegant devises. They were indispensable articles of furniture in the apartments of the nobility and gentry.

³³ It is remarkable, when the Reformation began to be agitated, how the moveable property of this Guild decreased. In 1534, $3\frac{1}{2}$ dozen of pewter dishes were delivered to the succeeding chamberlains; the next year $2\frac{1}{2}$ dozen only remained. In 1536, 2 dozen and three; in 1539, 2 dozen and a dish; and soon after they are not mentioned at all.

³⁴ Leland's description of the town about the middle of the sixteenth century is interesting. "The towne of Sleaford is buildid for the most part al of stone, as most part of al the townes of Kesteven be, for the soile is plentiful of stone. The Chirch of Sleaford is large, and for houses in the towne I markid but 2 very faire, the one longith to the personage as a prebend of £16 yn Lincoln, and standith at the est ende of the chirch, and Carre House standing at the south side of it." (Lel. Itin. Vol. I. p. 27.) The first of these houses was situated to the eastward of an Inn called the Waggon and Horses in Eastgate; and the site is now occupied by a small

streets were narrow and intersected each other at right angles, directed towards the cardinal points of the compass, to imitate the form of a cross, indicating an episcopal burgh; while the houses, constructed of timber and rough stone from the neighbouring quarries,³⁵ and gaudily decorated in their elevation, over hung the streets in the upper stories, with the two-fold purpose of gaining additional space in the higher apartments, and of forming a shelter over the foot pavement equally from sun and rain. An inclined plane went from each side of the street towards the centre, which was sunk into a trench for carrying off the water; and into this receptacle therefore all the accumulated filth of a population, not proverbial for cleanliness, was periodically discharged and suffered to concentrate; and was left to the chance of being conveyed into the river³⁶ by occasional rains; in which numerous truant swine wallowed

new built house which stands backward, and out of the line of the street. The old house belonged to the Impropiator and was sold in 1797 together with the old tithes yard for the purpose of redeeming the Land Tax. It was finally taken down about the year 1816. Carre House was on the south side of the church, and immediately opposite to it. Part of the building was taken down in the year 1796 to make room for the new alms houses; and the remainder in 1822. The materials were used in the erection of the Beadmens' Chapel. The road leading to the navigation wharf runs over a part of the site once occupied by this venerable mansion. But to proceed with Leland's description. "The house or manor place, lately almost new builded of stone and timbre by the Lorde Husey, standith southeward without the towne. The chief spring of Sleaford water risith a litle from Roseby village, about a mile by west from Sleaforde. Sleaforde towne nor market is of no price: the ornamentes of it is the Bishop of Lincoln's castelle, and the late Lorde Husey's house." (Lel. Itin. Vol. 7. p. 38.)

³⁵ In this part of the country much stone was used, and we are informed from that unerring source, the Hundred Rolls, (Vol. 1. p. 399.) that at the close of Hen. II. reign, great quantities of this material were dug out of the King's quarry at Lincoln and when squared by the masons was conveyed to Boston and elsewhere for the purpose of building houses.

³⁶ The river divides itself a little to the west of Castle hill, into two distinct streams, and so continues through the town; but again unites at a small distance westward of the navigation basin. Over these two rivulets or streams, which cross South-gate, bridges were erected about the middle of the last century, one of them bearing the arms of Carre and Balliol quarterly; i. e.

1 and 4. Gu. on a chevron ar. 3 mullets sa.—CARRE.

2 and 3. Or. an orle az.—BALLIOL.

The space between the bridges does not exceed 160 feet.

and sought what they might devour.³⁷ The market place was low and miry, although situated in the immediate vicinity of the church. Here stood a cross to remind the vendor of the obligations of his religion and keep him honest; another was placed at the junction of the cross streets, and a third in Old Sleaford. These crosses³⁸ were the resort of numerous mendicants; and here the squalid object of penury and wretchedness demanded an alms in the name of Christ, pointing at the same time to his acknowledged emblem.

Sleaford had not only a weekly market, but fairs four times a year. These fairs, in the early times now referred to, would be principally attended and supported by the Hanseatic merchants and those of Flanders and Italy, who transacted considerable business in the seaports on the eastern coast of Britain particularly in the neighbouring port of Boston, which was a staple town for the imports and exports in which these merchants traded.³⁹

At this time the country about Sleaford was alternately heath and fen; the low-lands inundated with water during a great part of the year; while those which were out of the reach of floods afforded pasturage for cattle. The heath was in a most wild and lonely state, and well calculated to perpetuate

³⁷ The towns of England were not worse in this respect than those of the continent. Paris was equally disgusting. Rigord tells us, that the King, standing one day at the window of his palace, and observing that the dirt thrown up by the carriages produced a most offensive stench, resolved to remedy the nuisance by causing the streets to be paved. For a long time swine were permitted to wallow in them; till the young Philip, being killed by a fall from his horse, from a sow running between its legs, an order was issued that no swine should in future run about the streets. The monks of the Abbey of St. Anthony remonstrated fiercely against this order, alleging that the prevention of the saints' swine from enjoying the liberty of going where they pleased was a want of respect to their patron. It was therefore found necessary to grant them the privilege of wallowing in the dirt without molestation, requiring the monks only to turn them out with bells about their necks. (Chamber's Old Houses in Edinburgh. p. 180.)

³⁸ Appendix D.

³⁹ Thus in the ninth year of King Edw. I. Bouricini Guidiconi for himself and his companions the merchants of Lucca, rendered an account of monies received for the new custom of wools, skins, and leather in England from Easter in the ninth year to Easter in the tenth year; amounting altogether to £1086 10 8 for the usual custom at Boston and elsewhere. (Madox. Exch. Vol. 1. p. 137.)

the legends of witches, imps, and fairies which were extant about its unfrequented recesses. Patches of heath and furze and bracken were interspersed amongst the scant herbage which afforded pasturage to a few sheep of stunted growth; while the knolls were stocked with rabbits. These were guarded from the incursions of poachers, by the wretched occupiers of a few huts constructed of mud and turf, and thatched with the long tough grass which grew in abundance round them; that were scattered irregularly over the heath, and dignified with the appellation of lodges.⁴⁰ But their vigilance was altogether incompetent to prevent the diminution of the property by nocturnal marauders, although it brought on frequent encounters which disturbed the peace of the country, and were attended with loss of life. The roads were but imperfectly maintained, for wheel carriages were not in general use; and the open country was impracticable by travellers except they were provided with a guide. Rivers and streams could only be crossed at the regular fords, and hence travelling was always dangerous, except in large companies; not to mention the predatory excursions of numerous band of robbers,⁴¹ many of which were under the protection of one or other of the noble barons who dwelt in fortified castles and strongholds.⁴²

⁴⁰ These lodges are of considerable antiquity. Thus the Lodge at Scopwick derives its origin from a grant made so early as the reign of Hen. II. by John Deincourt, lord of Blankney, to the Knights of Temple Bruer, whom he enfeoffed with two carucates or 240 acres of land in Scopwick field adjoining their own territories, and a bercary or lodge for the residence of their shepherds. This was a most important and valuable gift to the Templars as it included folds, pens, washpits, and every other necessary appendage to a sheep farm. Here the shepherds erected mud houses for shelter in the day time from the sun or rain, and at night folded their sheep upon the land, and retired to repose at the Lodge. The same system prevailed down to a very recent period, and it is a remarkable fact, that though these folds, &c. were only fenced by banks of earth, they remained entire at the end of 600 years after the grant was made, and were only demolished by agricultural improvements subsequently to the inclosure.

⁴¹ Sir John Fortescue, chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, speaking of the prevalence of robbery, observes; "it hath ben often seen in England, that three or four thefes hath sett upon seven or eight true men and robyd them al. There be more men hangyed in England, in a yere, for robberye and manslaughter, than there be hangyed in France, for such cause of crime, in seven yers."

⁴² Hume gives an appalling picture of the unbridled licentiousness of many of the barons, from whose outrages the people suffered most severely; "they usurped the King's demesnes; they oppressed their vassals; they infested their weaker neighbours; they invited all disorderly people to enter in their retinue and to live upon their lands; and they gave them

The castle of Sleaford was a magnificent pile of Norman architecture,⁴³ built on an artificial mound ; surrounded with a moat both wide and deep on three sides and by the river on the fourth. In form it was a square, flanked by towers and furnished with drawbridge, gate, and portcullis ; and being situated in the centre of a morass was deemed impregnable.⁴⁴ While the house of Lord Hussey⁴⁵ on the other side of the town, was a light castellated mansion,⁴⁶ as if it had been built with a view of forming a gay contrast to the sombre effect which was produced by the massive towers and battlements, the formidable machicolations and narrow loopholes of the adjacent edifice. The occupiers were, however, equally the source of honour and emolument to the good people of Sleaford, and the

protection in all their robberies and exactions. (Hume Engl. Vol. 2. p. 153.) And again, "The castles of the Nobility were become receptacles of licenced robbers ; who, sallying forth day and night, committed spoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities ; put the captives to torture in order to make them reveal their treasures ; sold their persons to slavery ; and set fire to their houses, after they had pillaged them of every thing valuable." The nature and extent of these oppressions are described with horrible minuteness by the author of the Saxon Chronicle. "They grievously oppressed the poor people by building castles ; and when they were built they filled them with wicked men, or rather devils, who seized both men and women, whom they imagined had any money, threw them into prison and put them to more cruel tortures than the martyrs ever endured. They suffocated some in mud, and suspended others by the feet or head, or the thumbs, kindling fires below them. They squeezed the heads of some with knotted cords till they pierced their brains ; while they threw others into dungeons swarming with serpents, snakes, and toads."

⁴³ Sleaford castle at present exhibits such a mass of foundations as we might expect to find on the site of a majestic fastness erected in feudal times for the residence and defence of a potent baron whether temporal or spiritual. Dungeons deep and vast connected by long and intricate passages, may still be traced ; and the towers were furnished with secret vaults.

⁴⁴ Appendix E.

⁴⁵ Vid. Appendix B.

⁴⁶ On what appear to have been the borders of a grass-plot or bowling green near the ancient site of Lord Hussey's house, commonly called the Old Place, there are still to be seen early in the spring, the aconite, crocus, and snowdrop peeping through the grass and shewing their beautiful blossoms, which have survived the ruin and neglect of three centuries ; and afford a pleasing but melancholy image of the stability and perpetuity of what we are apt to consider the frailest part of the creation compared with the life and fortunes of man. A massive thumb ring of gold enamelled green, in which is a seal bearing the impression of a tree and two foxes, was found here ; as were also a pair of silver sleeve buttons charged with the design of two right hands conjoined between a crown and two flaming hearts ; a nuptial present probably from a lady.

town could not do otherwise than prosper under their genial superintendence.

The people of this age were deeply sunk in superstition. Being studiously kept in a degraded state of ignorance, their minds were prepared for the belief of any prodigy, or the reception of any dogma of their teachers, how improbable soever it might be. Fear drove them to divination, and cupidity multiplied amulets and charms, which their prejudices invested with supernatural powers. Nor were the nobility exempt from the consequences of this superstitious feeling; but often suffered most severely in their property by the artifices of designing hypocrites. With such a population the current traditions of the country⁴⁷ were not likely to lose any of their influence. And the drake stone of Anwick,⁴⁸ and the witch of the heath,⁴⁹ were objects equally of veneration and terror.

The excellence of the religious edifices in places where the early English bishops possessed any property or influence, is an existing evidence of the interest which they took in every thing which concerned the rites of worship.⁵⁰ Now it is a fact that almost all the public amusements of the times were interwoven with religion, and placed under the superintendence of Guilds, by which they were conducted and brought to per-

⁴⁷ Appendix F.

⁴⁸ Appendix G.

⁴⁹ Appendix H.

⁵⁰ Instances of this are furnished not only in the Cathedral at Lincoln, but in the magnificent churches of Newark, Louth, and Sleaford; and the still smaller ones of Ewerby and Leasingham; all of which there are reasons for believing, were erected by the bishops of Lincoln. Nor were the laity backward in these gigantic undertakings. Indeed the building of churches and monasteries was believed by the nobility to *merit* reward in another world. A curious instance of this belief occurred in our own neighbourhood. Jerome Bertie, ancestor to the late Duke of Ancaster, one sunday in Lent, hearing a monk in the church exclaim against a murder occasioned by his ancestor, rushed in upon him and slew him; for which rash act he was excommunicated by the archbishop, from which he could not be absolved at any rate; so he went to Rome, where he obtained absolution with this injunction, that in the monastery of Canterbury he was to ask pardon of the archbishop and the monks; then to be absolved; to receive the Sacrament, and to give the convent two pieces of gold for the souls of his ancestors. He afterwards became a benefactor by *new building their church, which much impaired his fortune on earth but by it he obtained a greater one in heaven.* (Peerage. Vol. 1. p. 368.)

fection. From the most remote period of time the inhabitants of Sleaford and the vicinity, practised under that high sanction, the diversions which were common to every period of the English monarchy; from the Minstrels or Joculars in the reign of Athelston, through the routine of Tournaments,⁵¹ the Lord of Misrule,⁵² Church Ales,⁵³ Corpus Christi plays,⁵⁴ and the frolics of the Boy Bishop in the ages of chivalry; the bull and bear baitings, the Holk⁵⁵ and the mummeries of Hen. VIII. and Elizabeth, down to the balls and other diversions of the present day.

There exists presumptive evidence that the ceremony of the *Episcopus Puerorum* was celebrated at Sleaford, although it was somewhat unusual out of the limits of a cathedral or collegiate church; ⁵⁶ for in digging a grave in Leasingham church yard, a diminutive coffin stone was found in the year 1826, only $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 12 inches broad. It was prismatic, and adorned with a beautiful cross fleury in relief; and undoubtedly formed a covering to the sarcophagus of a boy-bishop, who died during the continuance of his ephemeral authority. And in the church of Quarrington at the east end of the north aisle, is an unusually small chapel not more than 4 feet square; which one cannot but think was intended for the ministration of this juvenile functionary. The solemnity of the *episcopus puerorum* though it may appear trifling in these days, was conducted with great pomp. A boy was elected on St. Nicholas's day, who was remarkable for personal beauty, to sustain the high office of a bishop until the 28th day of the same month. He made a solemn procession to the church attended by many other boys arrayed in priestly habiliments; and there, dressed in splendid robes, decorated with costly ornaments and covered with his mitre, he presided, with all the solemnity of an actual bishop, during the performance of divine worship.⁵⁷ After which he

⁵¹ Appendix I.

⁵² Appendix J.

⁵³ Appendix K.

⁵⁴ The Corpus Christi processions were instituted out of a reverence for the body of Christ.

⁵⁵ Appendix L.

⁵⁶ Strype is of opinion that the ceremony was sometimes used even in small parish churches.

⁵⁷ How strange soever it may sound to our ears, these boys actually performed all the offices of religion except mass.

made a collection from house to house which was boldly demanded as the bishop's subsidy; and he is said to have possessed such unlimited power that all the prebends which fell vacant during his presidency were at his disposal. If he chanced to die in that period he was entitled to all the honours of episcopal interment, and a monument was assigned to convey the remembrance of his honours to posterity.⁵⁸

The origin of religious Processions and Shows is soon told. The Saxons on their conversion to christianity, were found to be so inordinately attached to their accustomed celebrations and festivals as to impede greatly the progress of the Gospel. The pope's advice was sought and he commissioned Augustine to allow the natives the continuance of their ancient religious amusements;⁵⁹ but at the same time strictly charged him to substitute the name of a christian saint instead of the heathen deity in whose honour each feast was held. This example was all powerful; and a great part of the splendour and pomp of heathenism was, by gradual steps transferred into the humble and unassuming religion of Jesus.⁶⁰ As the heathen mytho-

⁵⁸ Archæol. Vol. 9. p. 43. Brand. Pop. Ant. Vol. I. p. 328.

⁵⁹ Far be it from me to assert that these celebrations savour of the source from whence they undoubtedly sprang. It would be the extreme of fastidiousness to pronounce those persons the slaves of superstition who celebrate Christmas with rejoicings because the same season was the brumal festival of Scandinavian mythology. The favourite burden of an old English song, Hey down derry down, is said to have been derived from a common termination of some ancient bardic verses, *Hai down ir derri danno*. Anglice; "Let us hasten to the grove of oaks." Can the imputation of idolatry be incurred by its adoption? The festivities of May-day can scarcely be pronounced impure on the ground that their origin may be traced to the phallic solar festival of the druidical priesthood. Shall we cease to decorate our churches with evergreen, under the presumed opinion that a similar custom was enjoined by the same hierarchy as a sacred symbol of domestic protection? To these inquiries I answer unhesitatingly—Surely not.

⁶⁰ The extent to which this principle was carried after it once got firm footing in the Church, is truly astonishing. So early as the year 400, the introduction of heathen festivals into Christianity was tolerated by Honorius conditionally, *absque ullo sacrificio, atque ullâ superstitione damnabili*. (Cod. Theod. l. 16. tit. 10. leg. 17.) In this country the brumal festival of Yule was imitated in the festivities of Christmas; April day was a transcript of the Indian Huli; May day was a continuation of the solar festival of the Druids; St. Valentine was substituted for the goddess Februa or

logy was symbolical, so the christian religion in process of time, became replete with allegory and emblematical machinery. The heathen had their Mysteries—so had the Christians; and divine worship, in like manner, was accompanied with flowers and perfumes and clouds of incense; and the religious edifices were adorned with images, pictures, and symbolical designs. The comparison might be carried on to an unlimited extent,⁶¹ but it would be out of place here, as I have nothing now to do with any part of the system⁶² but its predilection for *Processions* and *Public Shows*⁶³ which flourished in this part of Lincolnshire under the protection of the bishop, the monks, and the gentry; and in these times almost every village had the advantage of a resident proprietor.

As the bishop and his clergy bore a conspicuous part in these amusements;⁶⁴ it is reasonable to suppose that they

Juno, &c., at last the Processions and Plays were introduced; which became so fascinating, that they sealed the triumph of the church of Rome for a long period; although they contained the elements of its ultimate dissolution in this country in the ridiculous celebrations which were subsequently foisted in; as the Feast of Fools—the Feast of the Ass, and many others; which were instituted A. D. 990 by Theophylact, patriarch of Constantinople. (Warton from Cedr. Vol. 2. p. 369.)

⁶¹ Appendix M.

⁶² Tenison (Of Idolatry p. 92.) gives the following curious illustration of the above similarity. “Peter de la Valle speaks of an image in Ahineli in India called Virena. It stood at the upper end of a temple upon a tribunal, in a dark and solemn place. It had many candles set before it at the time of its worship. They carried it sometimes in procession under a rich canopy, with noises of Music, with perfumes and lighted tapers. There were other inferior idols serving as his attendants. And they had diadems like to those of the images of saints at Rome, or like to the Regno or pontifical crown of the pope. And his description of Virena puts me in mind of that of the virgin Halla made by Lipsius. It stands aloft, it is lighted with tapers, it is of silver; the image of Christ and of the twelve apostles are nigh it; an angel stands on either side, a silver lamp hangs by it.”

⁶³ Appendix N.

⁶⁴ Fosbrooke from Du Cange, gives the following curious account of a ceremony used in churches at Easter in these early times. A ball, which by statute, was to be of a size that could not be grasped by one hand only, was received by the chief ecclesiastic present; who, beginning an antiphone suited to the season, with the ball in his left hand, commenced dancing to the tune of the antiphone, the rest of the persons present dancing round him hand in hand. At intervals the ball was tossed about amongst the choiristers, the organ varying its measure according to the dance and sport. The dancing and antiphone being ended, the persons present had a dinner. It was the privilege of the lord of the manor to throw the ball; even the archbishop did it.

occupied a considerable share of clerical attention; and hence the places of Episcopal residence would be amongst the first where Guilds were established for their direction, after their introduction into England by the Normans. The Corpus Christi plays were performed at Sleaford in these ages, and contributed a splendour to the rites of religion peculiar to the times in which they flourished. They were a heavy and complicated piece of machinery,⁶⁵ very cumbersome, and tedious to the performers if not supported by excitement; for they commenced at five o'clock in the morning, and occupied the greater part of the day. They were attended with considerable expense; but as the tradespeople vied with each other in the exhibition of superior finery on this occasion, the charges were borne cheerfully; especially as a portion was paid out of the general funds of the several guilds; for there were necessarily many smaller societies of this kind in Sleaford, as no person was allowed to practice any handicraft employment unless he were a member of the fraternity. These subsidiary Guilds could be but small in a town where perhaps, in no instance, half a dozen families were maintained by any individual calling; but each contributed its quota towards the ceremonial, by providing its own flags, dresses and decorations, conformably with the part assigned to it by general usage.⁶⁶

The celebration was generally kept at one of the annual fairs,⁶⁷ which by increasing the influx of visitors, brought additional profits to the trades. The merchants frequented these fairs in large caravans, and employed every art to draw the

⁶⁵ Rabelais, (Vol. 2. p. 43.) ridicules these Mysteries and Moralities; and M. de la Chat thus comments on the passage. "In Rabelais time was publicly acted the moralities; and it being probable that it brought good grist to the actor's mill, he takes occasion to speak of a morality, played by six personages, viz. Judge, Councillor, Attorney, Clerks, Recorders, and Ushers of the Court, all of whom he calls *Clercs de Fineste* on account of their warming their clients out of their money *finely*."

⁶⁶ The preparations attending these payments would, however, furnish employment to the artificers of each separate guild, from which sufficient gains would commonly accrue to cover its share of the expences.

⁶⁷ In the reign of Hen. III. and Edw. I., Fairs were the places where the principal part of the traffic of the kingdom was transacted; and they were frequented not only by people from all the surrounding country, but by merchants from every part of Europe. They were held both by prescription and under the authority of royal charters, and yielded considerable profit to the Lords or owners who had jurisdiction in all matters of dispute, and administered justice at all courts of pie poudre, which were

people together. They were therefore accompanied by jugglers, minstrells, and buffoons;⁶⁸ who were no less interested in giving their attendance, and exerting all their skill on these occasions. As now but few large towns existed,⁶⁹ no public spectacles or popular amusements were established; and as the sedentary pleasures of domestic life and private society were yet unknown, the fair-time was the season for diversion. In proportion as these shows were attended and encouraged, they began to be set off with new decorations and improvements; and the arts of buffoonery being rendered still more attractive by extending their circle of exhibition, acquired an importance in the eyes of the people. By degrees the clergy, observing that the entertainments of dancing, music, and mimicry exhibited at the protracted annual fairs, made the people less religious,⁷⁰ by promoting idleness and a love of festivity, proscribed these sports and excommunicated the performers. But finding that

appurtenant, as a matter of common right, to every fair. (Stat. 17. Edw. I. c. 2.) The nobility, &c. laid up their year's provisions and other necessities at the great annual fairs, where every article of consumption was retailed by the merchants themselves. Of the importance of these fairs to traders, some notion may be formed from the Hundredors having found that 27 men had suffered damage 2 Edw. I., to the amount of £20, from being compelled by Walter de Shelhanger, sheriff of Lincolnshire, under a false writ, to go from Lincoln to London at the feast of the nativity of St. John the Baptist, whereby they lost the fair of St. Botolph, or Boston; (Rot. Hund. Vol. 1. p. 313.) The business of these fairs was conducted principally upon stalls, for which a duty was paid to the Lord of the fair, and accounted for under the name of stallage. (Frost. Hull. p. 18.) All sales were prohibited except in boroughs and markets, and these paid a toll to the King, (Mad. Exch. p. 530.) or to the lord who had an assignment of them by charter.

68 Appendix O.

⁶⁹ No records remain which have transmitted to us any account of the population of Sleaford at this period, but it could not be great when England contained but two towns which had a population of more than 10,000 souls; six only with a population exceeding 5000; and but 18 above 3000. Thus London contained 35,000 souls; York 11,000; Bristol 9000; Coventry 7000; Norwich 6000; Lincoln 5000; Beverley 4000; and Leicester but 3000. The population of many towns in England may be found in the Subsidy Roll of 51 Edw. III.

⁷⁰ From the testimony of contemporary writers, the people of this age were greatly addicted to their pleasures, and do not appear to have entertained much reverence for the services of religion. "Sebastian Brant, a native of Germany, in his Ship of Fools, published in the 15 century, accuses his countrymen of bringing their hawks and hounds into the churches, and interrupting the divine service; which indecency he severely

no regard was paid to their censures, they changed their plan, and determined to take these recreations into their own hands. They turned actors; and instead of profane mummeries presented stories taken from legends or the bible.⁷¹

In the miracle plays⁷² enacted at Sleaford the Minstrells were usually engaged, being at that period a separate and independent Guild.⁷³ They attracted an immense concourse

reprobates, and with the greatest justice. (Strutt. Sports, B. 1. c. 2. s. 1.) The passage is thus translated by Alexander Barclay:—

Into the church then comes another sotte,
Withouten devotion, jetting up and down,
Or to be seene, and shoue his garded cote.
Another on his fiste a sparhawke or fawcone,
Or else a cowkow; wasting so is shone;
Before the aulter he to and fro doth wander,
With even as great devotion as doth a gander.
In comes another, his houndes at his tayle,
With lynes and leases, aud other like baggage;
His dogges barke, so that withouten fayle,
The whole church is troubled by their outrage.

But these unholy interruptions to divine service were greatly encouraged by the ridiculous practices of the church itself, in the institution of such profane burlesques as the Lord of Misrule, Festival of the Ass, and others of equal impropriety.

⁷¹ Warton, Vol. 2. p. 367. M. Sismondi (De la Litterature du Midi de l'Europe) ascribes the invention of the Mysteries, the first modern efforts of the dramatic art, to the French; but the inference which he draws from it, that this was owing to the great dramatic genius of that people, must excite a smile in many of his readers. For certainly, if there ever was a nation utterly and universally incapable of forming a conception of any other manners or characters than those which exist among themselves, it is the French. The learned author, however, is right in saying that the mystery of the Passions, and the moralities performed by the French players, laid the foundation of the drama in various parts of Europe. See more on this subject in the Edinburgh Review for June, 1815, p. 46.

⁷² "During the Mayoralty of Richard Marlow, A. D. 1409, there was a great play in Skinner's Hall, London, which lasted eight days," says Stow, "to hear which most of the greatest estates in England were present. The subject of the play was the sacred Scriptures, from the creation of the world." "They call this Corpus Christi play in my country," adds Weever, (Fun. Mon. p. 191.) "which I have seen acted at Preston and Lancaster; and at Kendal in the beginning of the reign of King James; for which the townsmen were sore troubled, and upon good reasons the play finally suppressed."

⁷³ My researches into the existence of a Guild of Minstrels at Sleaford have been unattended with success. In the absence of decisive proof we are reduced to the necessity of relying for the fact in the following entries in the before-mentioned Compotus Roll, corroborated by the probabilities

of people, and all the neighbourhood, rich as well as poor, assembled on these solemn occasions.⁷⁴ On these public days pleasure was in the ascendant, and no feeling indulged but anxiety to give eclat to the ceremony. At an early hour in the morning every avenue into Sleaford was crowded with people from the country, of all sexes and ages, on horseback and on foot, eager to assist at or to witness the festivities; until the town was crammed with human beings and the streets appeared instinct with life. The performances included splendid processions, that were bounded by the two crosses, in the market place and beyond the bridge to the south;⁷⁵ with music, ban-

which result from convenience of situation in the neighbourhood of a cluster of baronial residences to which their services would be continually and essentially necessary:—

It. payd to ye mynstrells..... xiiij*d*.

It. payd to ye mynstrels of Corpus day..... iv*d*.

It. for beryng of ye Baner to ye mynstrells..... vid.

The minstrels were originally a highly influential body, and extremely popular amongst the Anglo Saxon and Norman nobility, by whom they were much esteemed. Froissart (Vol. 4, c. 41.) speaking of Gaston, Earl of Foix and a noble entertainment which he gave, says; “ther wer many mynstrells, as well of his own, as of straungers; and each of them dyd their devoyre, in their faculties. The same day the earl of Foix gave to the hereaulds and minstrelles the som of five hundred frankes; and gave to the duke of Tourayn’s minstrells gownes of cloth of gold, furred with ermyne, valued at two hundred frankes.” At the period now under illustration they had miserably degenerated; and in the fourth year of Hen. IV. it was enacted “that no Master-Rimour, *Minstrel*, or other *Vagabond*, be in any wise sustained in the land of Wales, to make commoiths or gathering upon the people there.” In England every vagabond who could thrum a guitar or beat a drum, obtruded his services on all public occasions, and brought great discredit on the order. The regular Guilds of minstrels discountenanced these proceedings but were altogether unable to suppress them, although their regulations usually contained an ordinance for that purpose. The Waits who accompany the town authorities in proclaiming the annual fairs, are the relics of these minstrels; and in some places they serenade the inhabitants at night, in the hope of a largess the next day.

⁷⁴ It is recorded that some of our Kings, attended by their whole court, honored the city of Coventry with their presence, during the celebration of these magnificent spectacles. Every stimulus was indeed given which might have the effect of ensuring a full attendance of the people at these solemnities; and the bishop granted forty days pardon “to every person resorting in peaceable manner, with good devotion, to heare and see the said playes.” (Harl. MSS. 2013)

⁷⁵ The stump of this cross still remains.

ners,⁷⁶ and gay dresses, accompanied by the vehicles in which the miracle plays were exhibited.

The proclamation for this solemnity, commanded on behalf of the king, the bishop, and the bailiffs of the burgh, "that no man go armed to the disturbance of the peace and the play, and the hindering of the procession, but that they leave their weapons at their inns, upon paying a forfeiture of their weapons, and imprisonment of their bodies, save the keepers of the pageants and officers of the peace; that the players in the pageants play at the places assigned and no where else, on pain of 40 shillings; that men of the crafts, and all others that find torches, come forth in array as in manner aforetime; that the craftsmen bring forth their pageants in order and course, by good players well arrayed, and openly speaking, upon pain of 100 shillings to be paid to the chamber without pardon; and that every player be ready in his pageant at convenient time, that is to say, *between four and five of the clock in the morning*, and then all other pageants following, each after the other in order without delay, upon pain of 6 shillings and 8 pence."

The commencement of the business of the day was by the public performance of mass in the parish church. This ended, the procession moved from the sacred edifice by the western entrances, in solemn silence. First a party of soldiers to clear the way and to prevent any interruption to the ceremony from thieves and vagabonds, who commonly frequented these exhibitions in the hope of booty,⁷⁷ as well as to keep an open space

⁷⁶ In the sacred furniture belonging to the altar, even in village churches, a banner was indispensable, which was directed to be "about nine or ten spans high and six long, of a colour suitable to its patron; and in the middle of it the patron must be represented in embroidery. This standard must be of satin, damask, taffeta, or camlet, lined with linen or a light stuff, and have a silk border and a fringe all round about it." (Rel. Cer. p. 141.) On public occasions, all the banners from the neighbouring churches were in requisition; which, added to those of the monasteries and guilds, would produce a most splendid display.

⁷⁷ Barnaby Googe, in his *Naogeorgus*, speaking of these exhibitions, says;—

A number great of armed men
Here all this while do stande,
To looke that no disorder be,
Nor any filching hande :
For all the church—goodes out are brought
Which certainly would bee
A bootie good, if every man
Might have his libertie.

for the procession amidst the dense mass of people who crowded each side of the street to witness the imposing ceremony.⁷⁸ They were furnished with halberds to knock down, *sans ceremonie*, any saucy peasant who should attempt to interfere with the arrangements.⁷⁹ Then came the host, elevated on high, in a silver pyx,⁸⁰ under a canopy of silk embroidered with gold, amidst a concourse of monks and nuns from the adjoining monasteries,⁸¹ the latter being closely veiled; who sanctified the procession by their presence, each bearing some relic or sacred ornament of the church; and the chosen priest who bore the consecrated element, was supported by two of the principal

⁷⁸ Strutt, however, informs us from an old play, that in some cases "men apparelled like greene men at the mayor's feast, with clubbs of fire-works," were stationed to keep a clear passage in the street. (Sports. Int. p. 23.)

⁷⁹ At this period the lower classes of the people were absolute slaves, and were as completely wretched as the despots who owned them, pleased. The goods of each person belonged to his master; and whatever injuries he might sustain he had no redress in a court of justice.

⁸⁰ The elevation of the host in procession is said to be no older than the middle of the 15th century. When pope Pius II. went to Mantua in 1458, to make an alliance against the Turks, he had the host carried before him on a white horse, under a silken canopy, and in a gilt tabernacle surrounded by a great number of lights. This is esteemed the most ancient example of the host being carried in pomp. In 1494, when Alexander VI. went to Naples, he had the host carried before him on a pad. Popes Julius II. and Leo X. observed the same at the coronation of Charles V. (Picaut. p. 186.) From this time the custom was introduced into all religious processions. Thus the rebels of Devonshire, in the reign of Edw. VI., to give a colour to their treason, carried before them, in their march to the siege of Exeter, the consecrated host under a canopy with crosses, banners, candlesticks, holy water and bread, and other sacred things. (Heyl. Hist. Ref. p. 76.) The elevation of the host was a protection against evil spirits. Sir Walter Scott (Scot. Minstrel. Vol. 2. p. 265) relates that "the lord of a certain castle, called Espervel, was unfortunate enough to have a demon-wife. Having observed, for several years, that she always left the chapel before the mass was concluded; the baron, in a fit of obstinacy or curiosity, ordered his guard to detain her by force; of which the consequence was, that unable to support the elevation of the host, she retreated thro' the air, carrying with her one side of the chapel, and several of the congregation."

⁸¹ Thus Barnaby Googe;—

The monks in every place do roame,
The nonnes abroad are sent;
The priestes and school men lowd do rore,
Some rise the instrument.

gentry in the neighbourhood habited in their robes of solemnity.⁸² At the appearance of these holy devotees bearing that consecrated substance, which the people were taught to reverence and adore, every head was uncovered and every knee was bent. All sound was hushed, and nothing audible broke upon the ear, save the measured tread of their sacred footsteps. This part of the procession having formed a line on the west side of the cross, halted with their faces toward the east. Then came the trades,⁸³ accompanied by lighted torches; each being entrusted with a separate play, or rather a separate act of the same play, under the direction of the brethren of Trinity Guild; who soon completed the other three sides of the square, all facing inwards, with the pageant vehicle in the centre before the cross. This vehicle was a lofty scaffold two stories high, constructed upon wheels like the ancient Thespian waggon; in the lower story, which was hid from the view by tapestry which reached the ground, and on which the subject of the performances was generally worked or painted,⁸⁴ the performers dressed; and in the other they exhibited. The stage was open⁸⁵ on the four

⁸² There can be no doubt but the Husseys and Carres of Sleaford, the Deincourts of Blankney, the Longchamps and Pedwardines of Burton, the Umfravilles and Tailbois of Kyme, the Latimers of Helpringham, the Veseys of Caythorpe, the Everinghams of Ruskington, the Delalaundes of Ashby, the Swinesheads, Ryes, Fraunkes, and others of the neighbouring gentry, would be successively the patrons of these celebrations; and accordingly we find some of their names on the annual list of auditors in the Compoti; altho' it appears that the civil management, during the latter period of its existence, was vested principally in the family of Carre.

⁸³ Each trade had its representative who repeated or chanted verses in commendation of his own craft.

⁸⁴ One of these carriages is engraven in Sharpe's Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries, anciently performed at Coventry; and the emblems painted on the tapestry, shewed it to have been a representation of the crucifixion of Christ; viz. the Cross and Ladder *in cross*; and two spears, one having a sponge at the end, in saltire, surmounted by the scourge, chain, hammer, passion nails, &c. It is remarkable that the very same design is carved on the font in Ruskington Church.

⁸⁵ In Persia some ceremonies were used on days of public rejoicing, which nearly resembled the above. Thus M. Petit le Croix, in his tale of Prince Fadlallah, has the following passage. "All the tradesmen being mounted in open chariots, hung round with bells, and streamers of all colours, together with tools and implements which denoted their several professions, and attended by a great number of kettle-drums, fifes, and trumpets, came before the balcony where Zemroude and I were seated; and all the people cried as they passed by—health and blessing on thee, thou apostle of God, &c."

sides that the public might hear and see ; and was overshadowed by a canopy of drapery supported at the corners by poles rising from the main body of the vehicle as a protection against the sun and rain. It was wheeled from street to street along with the procession, the floor being strewed with rushes. Here the first act of the Miracle Play was performed.

The body of ecclesiastics then moved forward,⁸⁶ followed by the Trades, each having its assigned uniform with appropriate masks ;⁸⁷ and poetical addresses⁸⁸ were delivered at any prescri-

⁸⁶ In all processions, the clergy were arranged by the following general rule, which was prescribed by the church. The banner or statue of the saint to be carried in front by a priest in his surplice ; then an exorcist with a basin of holy water and a sprinkler, followed by an incense bearer, swinging a smoking censer and holding the navette ; then the cross bearer between two ceroferaries. The rest of the clergy followed two and two. Such as wear pluvials march after the others ; but if there be any Canons among them, the Choiristers are not to walk before them. The celebrant goes last. (Cer. of Rel. p. 168.)

⁸⁷ Hence the origin of the idea which placed grotesque figures in conspicuous situations about our ecclesiastical edifices ; instances of which occur in the churches of Heckington, Ewerby, Anwick, Navenby, &c. In the interior of Sleasford church these grotesques abound. The corbels at the spring and centre of the arches, at the bases of the imposts which support the roof, and of the drip-stones which run round the windows, are figures of uncouth masks and monsters which were used in these plays. The three Kings of Cologne ; a turkish man and woman with turbanned heads ; a fox and goose ; figures embracing, and innumerable heads of both sexes—one in a cap and feather of Hen. VIII. time ; and some figures exceedingly indecent. The sculptures about the church at Ewerby are exceedingly curious and singular ; and whether they were introduced at the original building of the fabric, or at a later period, they certainly bear a reference to the pageants. We have here a man playing on an instrument resembling a lute or a guitar, to which another appears listening with great attention. Here are also men in masks and lion's skins—and in various postures, some of them highly indecorous—scratching their heads—turning up their rumps—blowing horns—distorting their features by pulling open their mouths with both hands, &c., &c. We have also, excellently sculptured, a bird with a man's head crowned—a man bearing a shield—and a female carrying a pig on which she is performing some operation, perhaps shaving it, as a rebus for the name of a monastery in the neighbourhood, that Kyme and Haverholm to which this church belonged, thus endeavoured to turn into ridicule, for the religious of different orders in these times, entertained considerable jealousy if not hatred towards each other—I mean Swineshead, anciently spelt Swine shaved. At one angle is a pair of heads, and at another a person with his hand elevated as if in the act of striking. Here is also a woman with a circular fan, like the sistrum of Isis ; a man with a book ; and to bring these brief notices to a conclusion here is a man astride a prostrate woman, with one hand under her chin and the other upon her head ; while her hands are united as in

bed pause in the ceremony, as adjuncts to the principal subject of the performance for the day.⁸⁹ This represented in detail, the whole course of sacred history, from the expulsion of Lucifer⁹⁰ out of Heaven⁹¹ till the final judgment. First came the

supplication ; and at the west angle of the tower is sculptured a boat with three persons, one at the head with an oar or boathook, the centre figure either climbing over the side of the boat, or kicking out the third, who is in the water, and appears to be sinking. The cornice inserted beneath the upper termination of the tower, for parapet there is none, consists of alternate flowers and figures some of which are indecent. The masked figures in the above pageants, which were sometimes extended to the representation of animals, and nondescript monsters, were derived from the mythology of the British druids ; some of the ceremonies of which were performed by means of the same machinery. From a tradition of this practice arose that prevailing opinion that "the spectres of Britain were hellish, more numerous than those of Egypt, of which some are yet remaining," says Gildas, "strangely featured and ugly, and still to be seen both within and without the forsaken walls, looking stern and grim, after their usual manner." (Gibs. Camd. xxxv.) The practice was continued as a mummary or holiday sport down to a comparatively recent period. "There was a sport," says Strutt, (Sports. p. 188.) "common among the ancients, which usually took place in the Kalends of January, and probably formed a part of the Saturnalia, or feast of Saturn. It consisted in mummings and disguisements ; for the actors took upon themselves the resemblance of wild beasts or domestic cattle, and wandered about from one place to another ; and he, I presume, stood highest in the estimation of his fellows, who best supported the character of the brute he imitated. This whimsical amusement was exceedingly popular, and continued to be practised long after the establishment of Christianity." It is remarkable that figures of men with heads of animals are very common on the monuments of Egypt, (Vid. the Plates to Belzoni's Researches.) Dr. Pococke says, (Descrip. of the East, Vol. 1. p. 95.) "in some of the temples I have observed that the human body has always on it the head of some bird or beast."

⁸⁸ Warton thinks that the custom of recitation on these occasions is of no earlier date than the reign of Hen. VI.

⁸⁹ Leasingham font undoubtedly contains on its several faces a representation of one of these Mysteries.

⁹⁰ Appendix P.

⁹¹ It will require greater ingenuity than I possess to give a reason for the appropriation of character which distinguished the several trades ; because though in a few instances, there may appear some obvious connection between the trade and the subject represented by it, yet, generally speaking, very little correspondence will be found. Brand in his History of Newcastle has an observation to the same effect. "Mr. Warton," he says, "who smiles at the idea of their having anciently committed to the blacksmiths the handling of the Purification, an old play so called, would have had still greater reason, could he have assigned with truth to

Tylers⁹² prepared to perform the introductory act of the play ; which was a representation of the fall of the rebel angels,⁹³ personified by a gigantic person⁹⁴ in the character of Lucifer⁹⁵

the Company of tailors, the Descent into Hell." And this appropriation becomes more difficult when we consider that in different places the same pageants are not assigned to the same Trades. A prologue was generally delivered in explanation of the part which each guild represented. Thus of the Tanners, who at Chester performed the fall of Lucifer, it was said,

Nowe you worshipful tanners, that of custome olde,

The fall of Lucifer did sette out :

Some writers a warrants, your matter therfor be shoulde

Craftelye to playe the same, to all the rowte ;

And yff any therof stande in any doubte,

Your authour his auther hath : your shewe let bee

Good speech, fyne players, with apparrill comleye.

⁹² Every trade had its own patron saint, under whose banner its members arranged themselves in these shows. The Painters claimed the patronage of St. Luke ; the Sculptors and Stonecutters that of St. Leonard ; the Smiths of St. Clement ; the Farriers of St. George ; the Curriers of St. Lawrence ; the Cowkeepers and Tanners of St. Bartholomew ; the Butchers of St. Mary of the Oak ; the Innkeepers of St. Eustace ; the Hatters of St. James the greater ; the Booksellers of St. Thomas Aquinas ; the Fishmongers of St. Andrew ; the Wine-merchants of St. Silvester ; the Merchants of St Sebastian ; the Saddlers of St. Saviour ; the Shoemakers of St. Crispin ; the Joiners of St. Joseph ; the Bricklayers of St. Gregory ; the Bakers of our Lady of Loretto ; the Coopers of St. Mary of the Chapel ; the Woolcombers of St. Blaize, &c., and so on throughout the whole of the calendar.

⁹³ It is reasonable to suppose that the performance of all these parts would require much practice and training to insure a proficiency worthy of public exhibition. But this is by no means the case ; for the historical representations were taught to apprentices along with their respective trades, and formed a constituent part of the art and mystery of the craft. Preparations were even made for it at a still earlier age ; for the pageants were impressed on the minds of children, by a ritual of question and answer, which was committed to memory and periodically repeated like a catechism.

⁹⁴ I have no doubt but Milton took his idea for the sublime poem of *Paradise Lost* from these exhibitions.

⁹⁵ In the *Shepherd's Calender* is an address, which was probably delivered by Lucifer in the pageants. It commences thus ;—

Ho, ho, you blind folk, darkened in the cloud

Of ignorant fumes thick and mystical,

Take heed of my horn, tolling all aloud,

With boystrous sounds and blastes boreal,

Giving you warning of the judgment final.

Stow and Holinshead concur in assuring us that during the performance of the Corpus Christi pageants in Danbury church, Essex, at the beginning of the 15th century, the devil appeared personally in the likeness of a Grey Friar, accompanied by such a storm of thunder and lightning as brought down the steeple, demolished the chancel, and frightened the spectators out of their wits.

blowing a horn; and many children⁹⁶ in a wheel carriage as imps,⁹⁷ all habited in uncouth dresses with horns, tails, and hideous masks.⁹⁸ Then followed the Saddlers, with designs painted on banners to represent the creation of the world;⁹⁹ after them came the Walkers, who represented Adam and Eve¹

⁹⁶ These little representatives of the infernal population amused themselves with tossing backwards and forwards upon pitchforks the figure of a condemned soul. In a MS. in the British Museum, (Harl. 2125.) Lucifer is designated in one of the shows, as "the devil in his feathers." He seems to have been "the principal comic actor, assisted by his merry troop of under devils, who with variety of noises, strange gestures, and contortions of the body, excited the laughter of the populace."—(Strutt. Sports. b. 3, c. 2. s. 5.)

⁹⁷ This custom of introducing the devil into theatrical performances, by way of teaching morality from the stage, has been recently revived in the spectacles of Don Juan, Faustus, the Bottle Imp, Der Freischutz, &c., and they have attracted more of the public attention than any other dramatic productions of our times.

⁹⁸ Thus Barnaby Googe;—

The devil's house is drawn about
Wherein there doth appeare
A wondrous sort of damned sprites
With foule and fearfull looke.

⁹⁹ Strutt (Man. and Cust. vol. 3 p. 144.) has preserved the copy of a handbill announcing to the public a performance which was modelled on the plan of the Corpus shows and pageants. It is called, "The old Creation of the world new revived." The contents are these. "1. The Creation of Adam and Eve. 2. The Intreagues of Lucifer in the Garden of Edon. 3. Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise. 4. Cain going to plow. 5. Abel driving sheep—"and so on through the the old and new Testament.

¹ The following is a specimen of the versification used at these times, taken from "The Travayled Pylgrym" of Stephen Bateman.

The mightye Jove celestiall, when first he took in hand
That Chaos huge, he made to fall, and formed so a land,
Wherin he set & created all things as now we see.
Firsts beasts, then ma which he prepar'd their governor to bee,
And named him in Eden ground Adam, that name he gave
Where nothing then could him confound till he a mate did crave.
She Eve hight, a woman kinde when he awakt hir sawe
As innocents no sinne did minde till Sathan wrought their awe.
That woman first she did consent, the apple for to proove,
Whereby the serpent did invent all joyes from them to moove.
For their offence they were exilde out of that plesaunt place;
And earth accursed forth did yealde the crabbed thorne a space.
The Earth then fayne were they to till, still labouring the ground;
Thus Sattan's drifts then thought to spill he gave that deadly wound
Although that Adam did offend, yet God so shewde his grace,
A newe Adam he after sent which did all sinne deface.

dressed in character.² The Ropers told of the violation of God's commands in paradise, by exhibiting the tree of knowledge with the Serpent-tempter twined round its trunk,³ and the fatal apple was borne by a woman in the character of our first frail parent; the Glovers had the history of Cain and Abel to perform; and the Watermen the punishment of sin by the universal deluge,⁴ and for that purpose they drew after them a boat or ship.⁵ The Bow-makers had Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau⁶ assigned to them; and the Mustard-makers and Chand-

2 Appendix Q.

³ It is curious to reflect on the very edifying opinions which have been promulgated on the subject of the tempter of Eve. Mr. John Bellamy, author of *Biblical Criticisms*, and the new translation of the Bible, in reference to Dr. Adam Clarke's theory that the tempter was not a serpent but an ape, remarks "whoever has seen a monkey must be sensible that among all creatures it is the least calculated, *on account of its ugly face*, to succeed in prevailing on the woman to disobey the divine command." On this point the author of *Religio Clerici* observes; "without enquiring which of the two disputed animals has the greater *sensibility*, or settling the claims to precedence among the black ape of Kiangsi, the great Gibbon of Molacca and Molucca, and the pongo-jacko of Java; we had better leave this matter as we find it."

⁴ In a play called "the Flood," Noah's wife is made to enter the Ark with great reluctance,

Noe.—Good wife, doe now, as I thee bidd.
 Wife.—By Christ not I, ere I see more need,
 Though thou stande all day and stare.
 Noe.—Lorde! that women ben crabbed be,
 And not are meeke, I dare well saye,
 That is well seene by me to-day,
 In witness of ye eichone :—
 Good Wife, let be all this beare,
 That thou makest in this plac ehere,
 For all they wene thou art master,
 And soe thou arte by Saint John.

And in the Newcastle mysteries she is made to reply tartly [to such an exhortation,

The devil of hell thee speed,
 To ship when thou shall goe.

⁵ This vessel was generally furnished with jury mast and ensign; for the people of these times in their periodical exhibitions appear to have preferred finery and show to propriety of delineation.

⁶ Many of these interludes were subsequently put into print, by which we are fortunately able to judge of their style and morality. In the Garrick collection is an extremely scarce and rare piece which has the following curious title page :—"A newe mery and wittie Comedie. An Enterlude

lers the Salutation of our Lady ;⁷ the Vintners were habited like Shepherds with their crooks, to represent the persons to whom the Annunciation of Christ's birth⁸ was made by the angels; the Goldsmiths, ornamented with the rich furniture of their shops, sustained the character of the three Kings of Cologne, who are represented on the same number of corbels at the west end of Sleaford Church. These were the wise men who made the offerings to our Saviour in the stable where he was born.¹⁰

newly imprinted, treating upon the Historie of Jacob and Esau, taken out of the XX. II chap. of the first Booke of Moses, entituled Genesis. The partes and names of the players, who are to be consydered to bee Hebrews, and so should be apparailled with attire.

1. The prologe. A Poete.
2. Isaac. An olde man, father to Jacob and Esau.
3. Rebecca. An olde woma, wife to Isaac.
4. Esau. A yong man and a hunter.
5. Jacob. A yong ma of godly conversation.
6. Zethar. A neighbour.
7. Hanan. A neighbour to Isaac also.
8. Rajan. Servant unto Esau.—Rajan entreth with his horn at his back, and his huntynge staffe in hys hande and leadeth iij grey hounds. or one, as may be gotten. Here he counterfyteth how his maister calleth hymn up in the mornings, and of his answeres.
9. Mido. A little boy leading Isaac.
10. Debora. The nurse of Isaac's Tente.
11. Abra. A little wench, serva to Rebecca."

⁷ From Jacob to the Salutation is a prodigious leap; but it is in strict accordance with the manuscript which constitutes my chief authority on this part of the subject.

⁸ Bale published a piece on this subject, entitled, "A Tragedye or Enterlude, manifestyng the chefe Promyses of God unto man, by all ages in the Olde Law, from the fall of Adam to the incarnacyon of the Lorde Jesus Christ. Compyled by Johan Bale, A. D. xxxviii." This is a very rare tract.

⁹ At Chester the Goldsmiths represented the "killing of the Innocents;" and in this mystery a low buffoon of Herod's court is introduced, desiring of his lord to be dubbed a knight, that he may be properly qualified to *go on the adventure* of killing the mothers of the children of Bethlehem. This tragical business is treated with the most ridiculous levity. The good women of Bethlehem attack our knight-errant with their spinning wheels, break his head with their distaffs, abuse him as a coward and a disgrace to chivalry, and send him home to Herod with much ignominy. It is certain that our ancestors intended no sort of impiety by these monstrous and unnatural mixtures. Neither the writers nor the spectators, says Mr. Warton, saw the impropriety, nor paid a separate attention to the comic and the serious part of these motley scenes; at least they were persuaded that the solemnity of the subject covered or excused all incongruities.—(Baker. Biog. Dram. Vol. 2. p. 42.)

¹⁰ Appendix R.

They were represented on three great horses, richly habited, with crowns on their heads, and surrounded by pages, body guards, and a retinue. A golden star delineated on a blue flag was borne before them.¹¹ The Coopers, by the infant Saviour and Mary his mother on an ass, and Joseph with his staff walking beside them, represented the flight into Egypt;¹² and the shoemakers, by another anachronism personated the Children of Israel in the same country. The Labourers had the charge of showing Christ's temptation¹³ by the devil¹⁴ in the

¹¹ In the sports of Twelfth Day, which are still observed in some parts of England, the legend of the three Kings of Cologne is constantly commemorated. I am unable to explain in what manner the names of these Kings were connected with the disease called the cramp; but they were certainly made the groundwork of a ritual for the benevolent purpose of effecting its cure, in the legends of our ancestors. The receipt is thus given in a medical treatise of the fourteenth century.—“For the crampe. Tak and ger gedir on Gude Friday, at fyfe parische kirkes, fife of the first penyys that is offerd at the crosse, of ilk a kirk the first peny; than tak them al and ga befor the cross and say V. pater nosters in the worschip of fife wondes, and bere thaim on the V. dais, and say ilk a day als mekil on the same wyse; and then gar mak a ryng thar of with owten alay of other metel, and writ with in Jasper, Batasar, Altrapa, and writ with outhen Ih'e nazarenus; and sithen tak it fra the Goldsmyth upon a Fridai, and say V. pater nosters als thu did be fore and vse it alway afterward.”—(MS. Arund. 275.)

¹² Appendix S,

¹³ In an old book, the property of Mr. Douce, we have the above pageant. It is entitled “A breefe Comedy or Enterlude concernynge the Temptatyon of our Lorde and Saver Jesus Christ, by Sathan in the Desart. Compyled by Johan Bale. Anno MDXXXVIII. Interlocutories. Jesus Chrissus—Satan Tentator Angelus primus et alter.”

¹⁴ It is a most remarkable fact that during the unhappy reign of Charles I., the puritans in their zeal for pulling down the images of saints and holy men, pursuant to an order of the House of Commons, (Nals. Collect. Vol. I. p. 735.) generally spared the devil's picture wherever it was found. Thus a nonconformist minister, named Richard Culmer, while employed in defacing the windows in Christ Church, Canterbury, in which, amongst other things, was represented the Temptation of Christ, brake down Christ and left the devil standing; for which he afterwards gave this reason; that he had an order to take down Christ, but none to take down the devil. And a thing of the same kind happened where General Ireton had his quarters. (Countermines, p. 173.) In his zeal against the images at a church, whose windows were very beautiful, he made all the twelve apostles, and many other saints, suffer a second martyrdom; only the picture of the old dragon, vomiting the flames of hell out of his mouth, was spared, and for old acquaintance sake, left entire; which occasioned the inhabitants to whisper among themselves, that it was plain enough to see who was Ireton's saint. (Walker's suff. of Cler. part I. p. 28.) In like manner, amidst the distraction which took place at the same period, in the churches of this neighbourhood, several specimens of the devil's effigy still remain entire.

wilderness, and they carried a picture or model of the temple at Jerusalem, with the saviour and his tempter perched on a pinnacle; and St. John the Baptist¹⁵ in his garment of camel's hair, leathern belt, and crosier staff, was the part allotted to the Barbers, while the Millers represented the resuscitated Lazarus in his winding sheet; the Skinners Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the Lusters his agony in the garden; and the Tailors the unjust judge, Pilate, who was exhibited on his throne, and asleep; to show the fatal lethargy of his senses, when in the face of the clearest evidence, and in violation of the reproaches of conscience, he passed sentence of death on an innocent person.¹ Then came the Bakers with scourges, the Potters and Weavers with other emblems of the crucifixion, and the Barkers bearing a cross,¹⁷ to represent the successive steps of our Saviour's suffer-

¹⁵ Bishop Bale published in 1538, "a brefe Comedie or Interlude of Johan Baptystes preachyng in the Wyldernesse, openyng the craftye Assaultes of the Hypocrytes wyth the glorious Baptysme of the Lord Jesus Christe." This was the second dramatic piece printed in England; it is in metre, and in the old black letter.—(Baker. Biog. Dramat. Vol. 2. p. 171.)

¹⁶ Menot, in his sermons, folio 169, col. 3., asserts, that rather than Christ should not have been crucified, the Virgin Mary would have crucified him with her own hands.

¹⁷ This cross was consecrated in the following form;—*Sanctificetur Lignum istud in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, et benedictio illius ligni in quo membra sancta salvatoris suspensa sunt, sit in isto ligno; ut orantes inclinantesque se propter Deum ante istam cruam inveniant Corporis et Animæ sanitatem.*—(Pontif. in Bened. nov. Crucis.) The legend respecting the true cross is curious. From the period of its exhumation on mount Calvary by the mother of the Emperor Constantine, it is traced for no less than twelve centuries. At first inshrined in silver in the church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, the 14th of September, the anniversary of its Exaltation, was nominated a feast day, and a warden was appointed, styled the Staurophylax. It afterwards went to Casinum; to Palestine, where the Crusaders bore it before their armies, and on one occasion one-half was captured by the enemy. The Emperor Baldwin sold it to Saint Louis; and in France it remained until some unknown thieves stole it in 1575, and it was not again discovered. However it is a consolation to the devotee that there still remain an abundance of its fragments; enough, it has been wickedly remarked, to be the produce of a forest, or to build a navy.--(From a paper by Viscount Mahon, read before the Antiquarian Society, Feb. 10, 1831.) Thus in the will of William Lord Bardolf, Lord of Ruskington, we find the following clause;—"To my heir male, whomsoever he be, a part of the very Cross of our Lord set in gold."—(Test. Vet. p. 116.)

ings and death ; the Cooks depicted the Descent¹⁸ into Hades,¹⁹ and the Wrights the resurrection from the dead ; the Gentlemen the castle²⁰ of Emmaus, where Jesus manifested himself to the two disciples ; and the Smiths²¹ the ascension into heaven. Then, as an appropriate adjunct to the history of Christ, followed another body of the priests, who displayed, according to the traditions of the Romish Church, the first act of power in the glorified Saviour, in the coronation of the blessed virgin ;²² while to conclude the pageants, the Merchants shadowed forth Dooms-

18 Appendix T.

¹⁹ The MS. describes it—"Harynge of Hell;" called in the Chester plays the Harowinge of Hell.—(Harl. MS. 2013.) Harrow—arought—an exclamation of terror, betokening also a want of assistance ; whence probably the adverb of expulsion—aroynt

St. Withold footed thrice the wold,
He met the nightmare and her name told,
Bid her alight and her troth plight
And Aroynt thee witch, aroynt thee right.

SHAKESPEARE.

The word *harrow* is used by the lower classes in this part of Lincolnshire to convey an idea of extreme fatigue, thus :—"I am clear harrowed out." In the Craven Glossary the word aroynt is derived from the Rowan tree or mountain ash, which was, and still is, thought to possess many mysterious properties. "Royntree, Roantree, Rowantree, Rantree, Wicken, Wigan, Wibeale, Hazel ; Mountain Ash, *sorbus aneuparia*, Linn. Dan. *Roune*. Thompson in his Etymons says, that the word aroynt signifies reprobation from Goth. *raun* ; a tree of wonderful efficacy in depriving witches of their infernal power ; and she was a very thoughtless housewife who had not the precaution to provide a churn staff made of this precious wood. When thus guarded, no witch, however presumptuous, had the audacity to enter. Sometimes a small piece of it was suspended from the button-hole, which had no less efficacy in defending the traveller. May not the sailor's wife, in Macbeth, have confided in the divine art of this tree when she triumphantly exclaimed, *aroynt thee*, alias, *a-royntree* ! With the supernatural aid of this—pointing, it may be supposed, at the *royntree* in her hand—I defy thy infernal power. The event evidently proved her security ; for the witch, having no power over her, so completely protected, indignantly and spitefully resolves to persecute her unoffensive though unguarded husband on his voyage to Aleppo."

20 Appendix U.

²¹ Some remains of a Guild house still exist at Silk Willoughby, in the form of a gothic window, over which are carved hammers, tongs, and other implements used by the Smiths ; and I think it extremely probable that certain of the minor Guilds of Sleaford might have their hall in the neighbouring villages where others of the same trade resided.

22 Appendix V.

day,²³ by the impious expedient of personifying the angels and archangels,²⁴ proceeding by the sound of the eternal trumpet to the throne of Judgment, on which was placed, in a manner, it should appear, not at all consonant with the ideas which ought ever to be present to the mind of man when reflecting on that august and majestic personage, the Deity himself, dressed up in a painted garment,²⁵ as we learn from the following entry in the Book of Compoti already referred to.

²³ In the archives of Lincoln Cathedral is a very scarce and valuable copy of an ancient Morality on this subject, entitled, "Here begynneth a Treatyse, how ye hye Fader of Heven sendeth Dethe to somen every Creature to come and gyve a Counte of theyr lyves in this worlde, and is in Maner of a Morall Play." Underneath are rough figures of death beckoning to a man, behind whom is a cross and over his head the inscription,—**EVERY MAN.** It is imprinted for John Skot, and has no current title, catchword, or number of pages. The prayer of Prudentius respecting his final state is curious. He prays, "that when he is dead, he may not see a devil to carry his soul into the black dens where he will be forced to pay whatever he owes, to the last farthing. He doth not beg to be in the place where the blessed dwell; but says that he shall be contented, provided he sees no devil and hell does not devour his soul. That since it is necessary, because of the corruption which his soul had contracted in the body, he consents to 'e swallowed up by the sad fire of Avernus, provided, however, that it shall not be too hot. Let others, he exclaims, be gloriously crowned in an immense light, and I but lightly burnt."—(Le. Clerc. Vit. Prud. p. 327.)

²⁴ Warb. MSS. Lansd. Coll. Brit. Mus. 896. VIII. p. 180.

²⁵ Thus in a Mystery called "God's Promises," the principal character is Pater Cælestis, the Heavenly father.—(Dodsley's Coll. of Old Plays, V. 1.) The deity was made to deliver a speech, which in the Coventry Plays began thus:—

Ego sum de Alpha et Omega principium et finis.

My name is knowyn God and Kynge,
My worke for to make now wyll I wende,
In myself restyth my reyneynge,
It hath no gynnyng ne non ende.

(Cott. MSS. B. M. Vesp. D. VIII.)

This personation of the deity was forbidden by the Council of Trent; and the catechism issued by that council thus explains the first commandment, "Moses when he would turn the people from idolatry, said to them, you saw no similitude on the day in which the Lord spake to you in Horeb from the midst of the fire;—which that most wise lawgiver therefore said, lest being seduced by error or mistake, *they should make an Image of the Divinity*, and so give the honour due to God unto a creature."—(Cat. ex Decr. Conc. Trid. p. 394. See also Syn. Nic. 2, act 3, p. 184. a Theod. Patr. Hierosol.) In the time of Epiphanius the use of Images in places of worship was not become an established custom for he "tore a veil in a church of a village in Palestine, named Anablatha, because there was a picture upon it, saying, that it was against the authority of the Scriptures. He himself relates that action in a letter of John, Bishop of Jerusalem,

1480 It payd for the hymnall of ye play for
ye Ascencon²⁶ & the wrytyng of spechys &
payntyng of a garmet for god²⁷ iijs. viij*d*.

Besides these there appeared at intervals regular personations of the saints,²⁸ both male and female. Dennis, to whom the church is dedicated, proceeded in solemn state, carrying his

which St. Jerome translated into Latin, and speaks of it as an action which nobody could blame, and which was grounded upon the doctrine of the Apostles. However it appears, from Prudentius, that this was not the opinion of the whole christian church ; and one may see thereby, that the single testimony of one Father is not sufficient to judge of the opinions of all the Christians, as it is but too often practised.”—(Le Clerc. vit. Prud.)

²⁶ In the Beehive of the Romish Church we are informed that “ Vpon Ascension Day they pull Christ up on hie wwt ropes aboue the clouds, by a vise deuised in the rooffe of the church, and they hale him vp.” But the processions were principally performed at Whitsuntide; for it was at this festival that the Corpus Christi procession was celebrated at Rome, where, in the phraseology of the papal see, the Most Holy carries the Most Holy ; and imitated in every city and town of his Holiness’s spiritual dominions. “ At the feast of Witsuntyde,” says Lambarde, (Topog. Dict. fo. 459.) “ the comynge downe of the Holy Gost was set forthe by a whyte pigion, that was let to fly out of a hole that ys to be seen in the mydst of the rooffe of the great ile, & by a censer, which descendinge out of the same place almost to the verie grounde, was swunged up and downe at suche a lengthe that it reached with thone swepe almost to the west gate of the church, and with the other to the guyre staires of the same, breathinge out over the whole church and companie amost pleasant perfume, of such swetethings as burned therein. With the like doombe shewes also they used everie where to furnish sondrye parts of their church service, as by their spectacles of the nativite, passion and ascension.” The celebration of these festivals was strongly condemned by succeeding writers. Googe, in a paper in his Neogeorgus, called the Pope’s Kingdom, thus expresses himself ;—

‘Their feastes, and all their holydayes
They keep throught the yeare,
Are full of vile idolatry,
And heathen like appeare.
I shew not here their daunces yet
With filthy gestures mad,
Nor other wanton sports that on
The holydayes are had.
In some place solemne sights and showes,
And pageants faire are played,
With sundry sorts of maskers brave,
In straunge attire arrai’d.

²⁷ In the copy of an Illumination, published by Strutt in his Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities, marked 60, we have an abbot of St. Albans in the act of worshipping the deity, who is clothed in a “ red and blus robe, the glory is gold on a yellow ground.”

²⁸ Appendix W.

mitred head in his hand;²⁹ Andrew with his saltire cross; Peter bearing the keys, Christopher carrying a figure of our Saviour on his brawny shoulders; Michael³⁰ in complete armour with sword and wings; George and the Dragon;³¹ Clement with a

²⁹ St. Dennis was beheaded on a mountain in the neighbourhood of Paris, and, according to the authority of Ribadeneira, "the body rose upon its feet, and took its own head up in its hands, as if he had triumphed and carried in it the crown and token of its victories. The angels of heaven went accompanying the saint, singing hymns choir-wise, with a celestial harmony and concert, and ended with these words, *Gloria tibi Domine alleluia*; and the saint went with his head in his hands about two miles, till he met with a good woman called Catula, who came out of her house and the body of St. Dennis going to her, it put the head in her hands."

³⁰ The following curious story is related of this Saint:—"Michael appeared to another Byshop, and badd hym go to an hyll toppe unto the mount of Gardell and there as he founde a Bull teyed, he sholde make a Chyrch in the worship of God and Saint Michael. Than were there two Roches of stone on either side, that the werke might not up. Than Saint Michael appeared to a man that hyght Haymo, and badde him go and put awaye the Roche and drede no thynge. So this man went thyder and sette to his shoulders, and badde the Roche goo utter in the name of God and St. Michael, and so the hylles wente utter as moche as neded to the werke." Tenison (Idol. p. 221.) deduces this saint from the Saxon deity, Woden, and thus speaks of the institution of his festival.—"In the fifth century, St. Michael the archangel, a most eminent patron amongst the northern christians, was first commemorated in the western church by a solemn feast. I would here further note, that Woden was in the highest esteem among them. That Michael answereth to him, being, as the Roman Litanies stile him the prince of the heavenly host; that this feast of Saint Michael was then instituted, when peace was desired between Odoacer, King of the Heruli, who came first from Scandinavia, and were called afterwards Lombards, and Theodorick, the first King of the Goths in Italy."—(Vid. Baron. Annal. Tom. 6 p. 537.—Lit. de Sanct. Aug. ap. Horstii-Paradis. Sect. 2. p. 96.) St. Michael was generally represented in the act of killing the dragon, or at least with that animal prostrate at his feet. Thus the Carthusian Priory at Hull, in conformity with usual custom, had the arms of the founder and a figure of the patron saint Michael, combined on the monastic seal. He was portrayed standing under a tabernacled canopy consisting of three arches slightly pointed, surmounted by crocketed pediments; in his right hand is a crosier with which he strikes the dragon that lies overthrown at his feet; and in his left hand a shield charged with a cross argent in a field gules.

³¹ In the christmas sports still used in this county, St. George thus introduces himself;—

Here comes I St. George,
That worthy champion bold,
And with my sword and spear
I won three crowns of gold.
I fought the dragon bold,

triple crown, and bearing an anchor;³² Remigius,³³ Bartholomew, and Guthlac with knives and scourges;³⁴ Gilbert, a saint borne down with age and supporting himself on his pastoral staff;³⁵ the Virgin with her symbolical lilies; Agnes with her lamb;³⁶

And brought him to the slaughter,
By that I gained fair Sabra
The King of Egypt's daughter.

So great appears to have been the veneration in this country for St. George its patron, that at the Reformation, A. D. 1536, when numerous saints were struck out of the Calendar, by authority, St. George was suffered to remain, equally with the Virgin and the apostles.—(See Bishop Sparrow's Collect. p. 225.) The nine worthies were frequently introduced into these shows, a custom which is finely ridiculed by Shakespeare, in his Comedy of Love's Labour Lost. In the old ballad of the Seven Champions of Christendom, the victory of St. George over the Dragon is thus described:—

When many hardy strokes he'd dealt

And could not pierce his hide,

He run his sword up to the hilt,

In at the Dragon's side;

By which he did his life destroy,

Which cheered the drooping King;

This caused an universal joy,

Sweet peals of bells did ring.

³² Appendix X.

³³ Remigius was the first Norman Bishop of Lincoln.

³⁴ Appendix Y.

³⁵ Gilbert was a famous Lincolnshire saint, and was much venerated in the division of Kesteven. He instituted at Sempringham, Haverholm, and Catley, monasteries for men and women, which are thus lampooned by Wireker an ancient poet, translated by Bale.

The monks sing the mass, the nuns sing the other,

Thus doth the sister take part with the brother;

Bodies not voices a wall doth dissever,

Without devotion they sing both to gether.

Why should I prate,

An order as begun of late.

Yet will I not let the matter so passe,

The silly brethren and sisters alas,

Can have no meeting but late in the dark,

And this you know well is a heavy werk, &c.

³⁶ There is a very singular tradition about this saint, which is related at length in the Roman Breviary. By the Prefect's command she was stripped naked and carried to the public stews; but God gave such a miraculous length and thickness to her hair that it covered her more completely than her clothes; and when she entered the brothel, an angel

Catherine and her wheel;³⁷ Agatha with her breasts in a dish: Bridget with book and crosier, &c., all of which would be highly picturesque, and add to the fascination of the scene.³⁸ The procession was finally closed by a band of soldiers.

spread such a dazzling light round her, that none could see her by reason of the great splendour. Immediately there appeared a white garment which she put on, and it fitted her so exactly that all the spectators were firmly persuaded it was made by an angel. The son of the Prefect ventured to enter into that light; but before he had touched her, he was choked by the devil, and immediately dropped down dead. After her death St. Agnes appeared to her parents attended, as it is said, by a snow-white lamb; and this emblem of innocence was consequently assigned to her. At her festival which was held on January 21st, the ladies of Rome offered up young lambs to her; and the Archiepiscopal Pallium, furnished by the pope, was made of their wool. Silly girls fast on this day that they may dream of their future husbands; and observe this process, according to Aubrey. The expectant "takes a row of pins, and pulling out every one, one after another, saying a Pater Noster, sticks a pin in her sleeve, and she will surely dream of him whom she will marry."

37 "A Miracle Play of St. Katharine was written by Geoffery, afterwards abbot of St. Albans; a Norman who had been sent over by abbot Richard to take upon him the direction of the school of that monastery; but coming too late went to Dunstable, and taught in the abbey there, where he caused this dramatic piece to be acted, perhaps by his scholars. This was long before the year 1110, and probably within the eleventh century. The above play was, for aught that it appears to the contrary, the first spectacle of this sort exhibited in these kingdoms; and, as M. L'Extant observes, might have been the first attempt towards the revival of dramatic entertainments in all Europe, being long before the representations of Mysteries in France; for these did not begin till 1398. Matthew Paris, who first records this anecdote of the play of St. Katharine, says, that Geoffery borrowed copes from the sacrist of the neighbouring abbey of St. Albans, to dress his characters." (Baker. Biog. Dramat. Vol. 2. p. 235.)

38 "Anacreon ingeniously tells us, that nature gave women beauty, that they might use it instead of spears and shields, and conquer with greater speed and force than either iron or fire can. Helena, Phryne, and innumerable others are witnesses of this truth. One lady, when she was bound to the stake to be stoned, with the lightning of her eyes disarmed her executioners; another when her crime was proved, and though she had often offended before, when she tore her garments, and opened her breast, she stopped the judges' mouth; and when her beauty pleaded her cause, every body acquitted her." (Tooke's Pantheon. c. 12. s. 6.) Mercatus, physician to Philip II, King of Spain, asserts that he had seen a very beautiful woman break a steel mirror to pieces, and blast some trees by a single glance of her eyes!

The effect of this display was much increased by the peculiar style of building used in those times. The houses in the principal streets were tastefully ornamented. Some had oriel windows; others had decorated gables which were placed fronting the street; some were rich in heraldic devices; many were surmounted by chimneys of curious workmanship, and on all occasions a monotonous uniformity was carefully avoided. Banners were suspended from the upper stories, together with branches of trees, gaily adorned³⁹ with ribbons and painting, rich tapestry, festoons of flowers, and the richer ornaments of female beauty; and these overhanging the streets on both sides, would convey a boldness and gaiety to the scene,⁴⁰ which could

³⁹ We must not however assign to the Sleaford pageants the same degree of magnificence with which they were distinguished in the metropolis; where, under the eye of monarchy, their splendour was incomparable. "The fronts of houses in the streets through which the processions passed were covered with rich adornments of tapestry, arras, and cloth of gold; the chief magistrates and most opulent inhabitants appeared on horseback in sumptuous habits and joined the cavalcade; while the ringing of bells, the sound of music from various quarters, and the shouts of the populace, nearly stunned the ears of the spectators. At certain distances, in places appointed for the purpose, the pageants were erected, which were temporary buildings, representing castles, palaces, gardens, rocks or forests, as the occasion required; where nymphs, fawns, satyrs, gods, goddesses, angels, and devils, appeared in company with giants, savages, dragons, saints, knights, buffoons, and dwarfs, surrounded by minstrels, and choiristers; the heathen mythology, the legends of chivalry, and christian divinity, were ridiculously jumbled together without meaning; and the exhibitions usually closed with tedious harangues replete with the grossest adulation." (Strutt's Sports, Introd. XXIV.)

⁴⁰ The Corpus processions in Spain have some singularities about them which are worthy of notice. "The streets through which they pass are hung with tapestry; and a cloth is spread quite across each street to prevent the raging heat of the sun from incommoding the devotees, and water is thrown upon it to make it still cooler. The streets are strewed with sand and watered, and covered with a vast variety of flowers. The Holy sacrament is carried under a rich canopy; his catholic majesty and the whole court follow it attended by the council and judges each having a taper in his hand. During the march of this pious retinue, the ladies appear in the balconies dressed in all their summer suits. They have baskets filled with flowers, and bottles of sweets and perfumes, which they scatter upon them who march in procession. Several buffoons attend this act of devotion, mix in the ranks, dance by the side of the *venerable* and play a thousand antic tricks during the procession, which generally terminates about two in the afternoon. They then break up for dinner; but meet again at the Aulus Sacramentales, which are a kind of pious farces played in the open street with lighted torches though at broad day." (All. Rel. p.)

not be produced in the present construction of our domestic habitations.⁴¹ Bonfires were made in all the open places; and the streets were strewed with branches of trees to figure our Saviour's entry into Jerusalem.⁴²

When the first act was over, and the procession began to move to another station, the bells struck up a merry peal, and shouting and applauses rent the air. The minstrels led the way, and were cheered by bright eyes and fair hands waving their scarfs and garlands⁴³ from the upper windows, on the south and west sides of the market place, as with a graceful motion the whole mass winded round the angle into South-gate,

⁴¹ In the year 1634, the town of Sleaford is thus described in "A Survey, &c., by a Captain, a Lieutenant and an Ancient," now in the Lansdowne Collection, British Museum, No. 213. fo 317. The party proceeded from Deeping to Sleaford, where, says the scribe, "we dyn'd, and spent about an houre in viewing the fayre Church and Ornaments there, chiefly 3, vizt. Sir Robert Carris, and his Grandfathers, and Mr. Walpoole's. Of the Towne I can say but little, onely this, that as our last nights towne was, soe is this furnished wth a market, and graced wth a sessions, and also wth two Knights' habitations." (Sir Robert Carr's and Sir Hammond Whichcote's.)

⁴² The expositors of mysteries tell us that every part of this ceremony had its allegorical signification. The processions were intended to remind the christians of the various peregrinations which the Saviour performed for the benefit of man; and to show the kind of life which a christian ought to lead upon earth. The elevated cross was to instruct the people that they ought always to have Christ before their eyes, and the Image of the saint; that as the patron saints imitated Christ, so they ought to follow the same example. The people walk after the priests and clergy, to denote that they ought entirely to rely on them for instruction, and implicitly to follow them in the way of salvation.

⁴³ From a Jewish tradition probably, which was early adopted by christians, that garlands were worn in paradise by the souls of just men deceased. Thus amongst the collection of Jewish traditions abridged from Buxtorf, and published in 1732, is the following. "It fell out that a Jew whose name was Pouim, an ancient man, whose business was altogether about the dead, coming to the door of the school, saw one standing there, who had a garland upon his head. Then was Rabbi Pouim afraid, imagining it was a spirit. Whereupon he, whom the Rabbi saw, called out to him, saying, Be not afraid, but pass forward. Dost thou not know me? Then said Rabbi Pouim, Art thou not he whom I buried yesterday? And he was answered, Yea, I am he. Upon which Rabbi Pouim said Why comest thou hither? How fareth it with thee in the other world? And the apparition made answer; it goeth well with me, and I am in high esteem in Paradise. Then said the Rabbi, Thou wert but looked upon in the world as an insignificant Jew. What good work didst thou do, that thou art thus esteemed? The apparition answered, I will tell thee: the reason of the esteem I am in is, that I rose every morning early, and with fervency uttered my prayer, and offered the grace from the bottom

where a temporary bridge passed the numerous party over the ford, under a triumphal arch, decorated with flowers and emblematical devices.⁴⁴ And here was performed the second act of the sacred drama; at the conclusion of which, the pageants were once more put in motion, and the vehicle became stationary at the junction of the London and fen roads, where a spacious circle was formed to witness the rehearsal of the third act;⁴⁵ while the fourth was performed at the cross beyond the bar, and returning through all the principal streets; various other acts were rehearsed, amounting to an indefinite number according to circumstances, and the whole business was concluded at the Guildhall.⁴⁶

of my heart, for which reason I now pronounce grace in paradise, and am well respected. If thou doubttest whether I am the person, I will show thee a token that will convince thee of it. Yesterday when thou didst clothe me in my funeral attire, thou didst tear my sleeve. Then asked Rabbi Pouim, *What is the meaning of that garland?* The apparition answered, *I wear it, to the end the wind of the world may not have power over me; for it consists of excellent herbs of paradise.*" (Scotts Minstrelsy. Vol. 3. p. 259.)

⁴⁴ On the water was probably some such device as is described by Sir Walter Scott, from Laneham, as exhibited on the lake at Kenilworth. "A raft so disposed as to resemble a floating island, illuminated by a great variety of torches, and surrounded by floating pageants formed to represent sea horses, on which sat Tritons, Naiads, and other fabulous deities of the seas and rivers, made its appearance upon the lake, and issuing from behind a small heronry where it had been concealed, floated gently towards the further end of the bridge. On the islet appeared a beautiful woman, clad in a watchet coloured silken mantle bound with a broad girdle, inscribed with characters like the phylacteries of the Hebrews. Her feet and arms were bare, but her wrists and ancles were adorned with gold bracelets of uncommon size. Amidst her long silky black hair she wore a crown or chaplet of artificial mistletoe, and bore in her hand a rod of ebony tipped with silver. Two nymphs attended on her, dressed in the same antique and mystical guise. The pageant was so well managed that this lady of the floating island, having performed her voyage with much picturesque effect, in a well penned speech, announced herself as that famous Lady of the Lake, renowned in the stories of King Arthur, who had nursed the youth of the redoubted Sir Lancelot, and whose beauty had proved too powerful both for the wisdom and spells of the mighty Merlin." Then followed a discharge of fireworks by water and land." Such, says Laneham, "was the blaze of burning darts, the gleams of curuscant, the streams and hail of fiery sparks, lightnings of wild-fire, and flight shot of thunder-bolts, with continuance, terror, and vehemency, that the heavens thundered, the waters surged, and the earth shook; and for my part, hardy as I am, made me vengeably afraid."

⁴⁵ The present Oratorios are nothing but these mysteries set to music.

⁴⁶ Appendix Z.

...the second act of ... the pageants ... the vehicle became station- ... the third ... the fourth was perfo- ... the principal streets; various ... according to circumstances, and the whole business was con- ... at the Goldhill

of my heart, for which reason I now pronounce grace in paradise, and am well respected. If thou doubtest whether I am the person, I will show thee a token that will convince thee of it. Yesterday when thou didst clothe me in my funeral attire, thou didst tear my sleeve. Then asked Rabbi P... The apparition answered, I meant it, to the end that the world may not have power over me: for it consists of excellent heavenly purchases. (Scott's Minstrelsy, Vol. 3. p. 259.)

APPENDIX.

44 On the water ... is described by Sir Walter Scott, from Lancham, as existing on the lake at Kenilworth. "A raft so disposed as to resemble a floating island, illuminated by a great variety of torches, and surrounded by floating pageants formed to represent sea horses, on which ... of the seas and rivers, made its appearance upon the lake, and issuing from behind a small heronry where it had been concealed, floated gently towards the further end of the bridge. ... appeared a beautiful woman, clad in a watchet coloured silken robe, bound with a broad girdle, inscribed with characters like the hieroglyphics of the Hebrews. Her feet and arms were bare, but her wrists and ankles were adorned with gold bracelets of uncommon size. ... black hair she wore a crown or chaplet of artificial mistletoe, and bore in her hand a rod of ebony tipped with silver. Two ... attended on her, dressed in the same antique and mystical guise. The pageant was so well managed that this lady of the floating island, having performed her voyage with much picturesque effect, in a well timed speech, announced herself as that famous Lady of the Lake, renowned in the stories of King Arthur, who had nursed the youth of the reformed Sir Lancelot, and whose beauty had proved too powerful both for the wisdom and spells of the mighty Merlin." Then followed a discharge of fireworks by water and land. "Such," says Lancham, "was the blaze of burning darts, the gleams of carcasant the streams and hail of fiery sparks, lightnings of wild-fire, and flight shot of thunder-bolts, with continuance, terror, and vehemency, that the heavens thundered, the waters surged, and the earth shook, and for my part, hardly as I am, made me vengeably afraid."

as The present Oratorios are nothing but these mysteries set to music.
as Appendix 2.

APPENDIX.

- A** Bertie of Evedon.
- B** Hussey of Sleaford.
- C** Figures of the Holy Trinity.
- D** Sign of the Cross.
- E** Old Customs.
- F** Dorrington Playgarth:
The three grained Oak.
The demon builders.
- G** Anwick Drake Stone.
- H** Witch of the Heath.
- I** Tournament on Lincoln Heath.
- J** The lord of Misrule.
- K** Church Ales.
- L** Holk Tuesday.
- M** Christmas Customs.
- N** Ceremonial on King James' Visit to Lincoln.
- O** Morris Dances.
- P** The Hell of the Miracle Plays.
- Q** Adam and Eve.
- R** The Three Kings of Cologne and Ewerby Wath.
- S** The Flight into Egypt.
- T** Descent of our Saviour into Hell.
- U** The Pageants.
- V** Services to the Virgin Mary.
- W** Patrocinity of Churches.
- X** Rowston Holy Well.
- Y** St. Guthlac of Croyland.
- Z** Hussey's Insurrection.

APPENDIX.

A. chap. 1.—note 33.

Peregrine Bertie married Ann, daughter and co-heir of Daniel Hardby, of Evedon, Esq., and succeeded to the estates of that family. The following inscription still appears on a monument in Evedon Church.—“Here lies the body's of the Hon^{ble} Sir Peregrine Bertie (3^d son of Robert Earl of Lindsey, &c.) and Governor of the City of Lincoln, in the civil wars under Charles I. ; And Anne his wife, daughter and co-heiress of Daniel Hardby, of Evedon, esq., by whom he had, sole issue, Elizabeth, married to the R^t Hon^{ble} Will. Lord Widderington, Baron of Blankney, now deceased ; who to perpetuate y^e memory of her father and mother erected this, 1705.”

B. chap. 1.—note 36.

The family of Hussey, of Old Place, Sleaford, is of Norman Extraction. Hubert, son of Helen, Countess of Hussey, came over with William the Conqueror, as Constable of his army ; and, according to modern genealogists, was ancestor to Sir Hugh de Hose or Hussey, who settled in Ireland, temp. Hen. II., and had, by the grant of Hugh de Lacy, the barony of Deace, in the couny of Meath, and other large possessions. From him descended the Husseys, Barons of Galtrine ; and James Hussey, the father of Edward Hussey, Esq., who, in 1743, married Isabella, eldest daughter and co-heir of John, duke of Montague, and relict of William, duke of Manchester. Hussey, of Sleaford, was a collateral branch of the same family ; and we find a John Hussey, of Sleaford, mentioned so early as the reign of Richard II., whose daughter Elizabeth was married to Robert Holden, Esq. At the battle of Agincourt, Mons. Henry Hussey was a Lancier in the retinue of the Duke of Gloucester ; and he is named the first on the list of 142 Lanciers of which his retinue consisted ; and in that list only three had the title of Monsieur. Early in the reign of Henry VI. we find John Hussey in possession of the manor house of Sleaford, and proprietor of considerable estates there, under a church lease it is supposed, as the whole of Sleaford, both new and old, belonged to the Bishop and the Abbot of Ramsey ; but the latter possessed only about 100 acres, soke of the manor of Quarrington. Sir William Hussey was called by writ 17 Edw. IV. to take the degree of Sergeant at Law ; and 21 Edw. IV.

was made Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and had 140 marks allowed him for greater state. He was living temp. Hen. VII. as is evident from this inscription over his arms in the bow window of Gray's Inn Hall.—“W. House, miles capitalis justiciarius de banco regis temp. K. Hen. VII.” In one of the windows of the Chapel, belonging to the same Inn, are his arms, impaling those of his wife, with this inscription ;—“Will. Hussee miles, Capitalis justic. ad placita coram rege, et Elizabetha uxor ejus filia Thomæ Berkely arm.”¹ Hollis found the same arms impaled in the windows of Sleaford Church, viz., OR. a plain cross VERT. impaling, GU. a chevron between ten cinquefoils ARG. On the third of November, 21 Hen. VIII., Sir John Hussey was summoned to parliament as a baron. He appears to have been in high favour with the king, for he was made one of the lords of the King's Council, and Lord Lieutenant of the county of Lincoln. In 1531 the king stood godfather to his child; and in the compotus of the king's privy expences for that year, we find the following entry. “Itm. Paid to Sir Arthur Darcy for the christenyng of my lord hussey childe iij li vj s viij ob. Notwithstanding all this favour he sunk at one blow by the violence of the times in which he lived; for, engaging too rashly in the feuds and differences about religion which were produced by the Reformation, he was attainted of high treason; his manor of Old Sleaford, with lands to the value of £5000 per annum, confiscated, and he himself beheaded at Lincoln. The popular account of the latter days of this once enviable, but ill advised and ruined nobleman, is, that joining the insurrection more in the character of an accomplice, than as taking an active and leading part, he was attainted; but though not present at the trial, was condemned in a summary way, together with another nobleman, the Lord Darcy, a descendant of the Darcy's, of Nocton Park, who was beheaded on the Tower hill, in London. Lord Hussey seems to have been concealed for a time, but at length was discovered in a house of his own at Lincoln; and being dragged out at a window with great violence, was taken to the castle yard and forthwith beheaded, agreeably to the sentence which had been pronounced on him at his trial in London. His children were restored in blood by Parliament but without restitution of title or estate. The possessions of Lord Hussey thus escheating to the crown; and the episcopal rights in Sleaford and Quarrington having been surrendered, in common with other property by the obsequious Bishop Holbeach, they were first granted to the Duke of Somerset; and on his

¹ Banks Dorm. Bar. vol. 2, p. 288.

attainder reverting again to the crown, they were given by Queen Mary to Lord Clinton. He sold them to Robert Carr, who became possessed also of several other manors in the neighbourhood of Sleaford; but the male issue failing after four descents, the property passed to the Earl of Bristol by marriage with the heir general; and he pays to the crown a fee farm rent of £50 per annum for the estates.

C. chap. 2.—note 14.

The christians of the middle ages entertained very gross ideas respecting the Trinity. A curious toy in my possession, which was found amongst some old foundations at Grimsby, is carved to represent it. Three human figures are placed back to back in a triangular form; the first is a portly personage with his hands folded before him, and bearing a little child on his left arm. The second carries the balance of Justice and Truth, and the third a dove. Over their heads is a pedestal on which is placed a lion, to represent the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. These figures of the Trinity are not unusual in Missals and Breviaries. Thus in a frontispiece placed before each of the three parts of an old Roman Pontifical printed at Lyons, is pictured an old man with a globe in his hand, and a glory streaming from all parts of his body. On his head is a triple crown, and over it this motto, "Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy upon us." Some of the early popes were very severe in their reprehension of this practice. John xxii, punished certain persons in Bohemia and Austria as profaners of religion, for having painted God the Father as an old man, the Son as a young man, and the Holy Ghost as a dove.² The more modern popes were not so strict. An article in the creed of the council of Trent,³ says, "I most firmly profess that the images of Christ, &c. are to be had and retained, especially in churches; and that due honour and veneration is to be given to them."⁴ At the Reformation all these images were abolished and destroyed. Thus in Bishop Horn's Injunctions at a Visitation held at Winchester, 1571, is this item. "That all Images of the Trinity in glass windows or other places of the church, be put out and extinguished."

D chap. 2.—note 38.

The sign of the cross was deemed of sufficient efficacy to drive away evil spirits; and even the ancient idolaters believed that this sign was the

² Aventin. Annal. Bojor. l. 7, p. 751. ³ Conc. Trid. Symb. p. 944.

⁴ Decret. Conc. Trid. de Invoc. p. 895.

conservator of many virtues, and therefore the Egyptian god, Serapis, was painted with a cross upon his breast. The profuse use of crosses was introduced into christianity after an extraordinary miracle which defeated the attempt made by Julian, the apostate emperor, to frustrate our Saviour's prophecy; by rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem. "He committed the conduct of this affair to Alypius, of Antioch, who formerly had been Lieutenant in Britain. When, therefore, this Alypius had set himself to the vigorous execution of his charge, in which he had all the assistance that the governor of the provinces could afford him, horrible balls of fire breaking out near the foundations, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place, from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and the victorious element, continuing in this manner, obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance,⁵ they fled together for refuge to a neighbouring church; some to deprecate the impending mischief; others, as is natural in such cases, to catch at any help that presents itself; and others again enveloped in the crowd were carried along with the body of flyers. There are who say that the church refused them entrance; and that when they came to the doors, which were wide open but a moment before, they found them on a sudden closed by a secret and invisible hand; a hand accustomed to work these wonders for the terror and confusion of the impious, and for the security and comfort of godly men. This, however, is now invariably affirmed and believed by all, that as they strove to force their way in by violence, the Fire which burst from the foundations of the temple, met and stopped them, and one party burnt and destroyed, and another it desperately maimed, leaving them a living monument of God's wrath against sinners. But the thing most wonderful and illustrious was a Light, which appeared in the heavens, of a Cross within a Circle. That name and figure, which impious men before esteemed so dishonourable upon earth, was now raised on high, and equally subjected to the common view of all men; advanced by God himself, as the trophy of his victory over unbelievers; of all trophies the most exalted and sublime. Nay further, they who were present and partakers of the miracle we are now about to speak of, shew, to this very day, the sign or figure of the Cross which was then marked or impressed on their garments. For at that time, as these men were shewing the marks, or attending to others who shewed them, each presently

⁵ Warb. Jul. p. 45, apud Amm. Marc. l. 23, c. 1.

observed the wonder either on himself or his neighbour ; having a radiant mark on his body or on his garment ; in which there was something that in art and elegance exceeded all painting or embroidery.”⁶

E chap. 2.—note 44.

It will be observed that the furniture and appointments, even of palaces and baronial mansions down to a very recent period, bore no comparison with the splendid seats of our present nobility ; yet they maintained a repulsive dignity and stately pride, of which we, in these liberal times can form no conception ; although their ordinary food was of a nature that would turn the pampered stomach of a modern fine gentleman—to say nothing of the other sex—who would reject, with disgust and loathing, a breakfast at seven o’clock in the morning, consisting of bread in trenchers, salted mutton and beef, eaten with their fingers, and copious potations of ale and wine to assist the digestion. And yet Aubrey tells us that “in the days of yore ladies and gentlemen lived in the country like petty kings ; had *jura regalia* belonging to their seignories, &c. never went to London but once a year to do homage to the king, or in Parliament time. They always ate in gothic halls at the high table, or *orsille*, which is a little room at the upper end of the hall where stands a table with the side table. The meat was served up by watch words. The poor boys did turn the spits and licked up the dripping for their pains.”⁷

F chap. 2.—note 47.

These traditions were mostly the offspring of druidical observances practised in this neighbourhood from the most remote period.

DORRINGTON PLAYGARTH

received its name from a series of games of which it was the scene long before the establishment of christianity, and which were instituted by the druidical priesthood, for the amusement of the people. They were subordinate appendages to the rites of religion, and when a public celebration was proclaimed, no one, except on the most urgent occasion, absented himself from the ceremony. The principal public Games were running, jumping, wrestling, riding either on horseback or in chariots—for which latter exercise the Britons were celebrated as being the most expert people

⁶ Greg. Nazian. Orat. iv. adv. Jul.

⁷ Aubrey MSS. Ashmole Museum, Oxford.

in the world—and hurling the quoit, bar or discus. They also embraced archery, sword and buckler exercises, the quarter staff or cudgel playing, and hurling the javelin at a mark. These games were always celebrated with peculiar solemnity under the superintendence of the druids; and were principally confined to young persons of high rank, so that it may be questioned whether they were often practised in Dorrington Playgarth, as no tradition remains to justify the conjecture. But the Eubates, which was the lowest class of the priesthood, had sports of their own with which they amused the peasantry and augmented their own emoluments; for they were fortune tellers, and dealers in charms and philtres. They professed to recover lost treasure by the practise of magical incantations; they could shew the simple swain the features of the maiden who was destined to be his bride; they could defeat plots and conspiracies; they could arrest the course of nature, and compel the graves to give up their dead.

The principal solemnity which was practised on this Playgarth, and it was continued down to a very recent period, was, dancing the solar deiseal. The villages were arranged in ranks and moved round the Playgarth in circles from east to west by the south; proceeding at first “with solemn step and slow,” amidst an awful and deathlike silence, to inspire a sacred feeling. The dance increased in its pace by imperceptible degrees, until the party were impelled into a rapid and furious motion by the tumultuous clang of musical instruments, and the screams of harsh and dissonant voices reciting in verse the praise of those heroes who had been brave in war, courteous in peace, and the devoted friends and patrons of religion.⁸ These dances were frequently performed in masks and disguisements, which custom was the original of those transformations which were of old ascribed to witchcraft and sorcery. The minor games practised here are such as the superstitious portion of the peasantry still regard with reverence. The autumnal fires are still kindled, except that the *fifth* is substituted for the *first* of November; and it is attended by many of the ancient ceremonies; such as running through the fire and smoke, each casting a stone into the fire, and all running off at the conclusion to escape from the black short tailed sow. On the following morning the stones are searched for amongst the ashes, and if any are missing they betide ill to those who threw them in. The ceremonies of gathering the misletoe at Christmas; and the sports of May day were also practised here; and the old people of

⁸ Welsh Archæol. vol. 1, p. 65.—Dav. Dru. p. 576.—Fab. Mys. Cab. vol. 2, p. 110.

the village well remember hearing their aged parents say, that when they were children it was customary to have periodical sports in the same place. The young people of both sexes danced on the green in the presence of the assembled villagers, who were seated under the Three Grained Oak which grew near the spot, to behold the sports; ⁹ and many rustic amusements were practised, in which the aspirants for applause endeavoured to excel in feats of agility and strength; an evident remnant of the druidical observances as were also the May Games celebrated on this spot, for the pole decorated with garlands was annually elevated on Chapel hill, down to the last century. It is evident, therefore, that this was a place consecrated in the feelings of the people from the earliest times.

THE THREE GRAINED OAK

was a most remarkable tree, and existed near the Playgarth to the conclusion of the last century, when it was finally removed, to the great regret of the inhabitants, who appear to have entertained something of an hereditary feeling of respect for its venerable shade. It was an object of adoration to the native Britons, and was worshipped as the symbol of DARON-WY, the God of thunder, from whom the village derived its name ¹⁰ It is a well known fact that the oak was the visible representative of Daronwy, and was considered as peculiarly sanctified by the god, if not his immediate residence. ¹¹ The fairest tree in the grove ¹² was therefore solemnly consecrated to this divinity with many superstitious ceremonies. ¹³ Sometimes it was divested of some of its collateral branches, and one of

⁹ Gilbert White in his natural history of Selborne, (Letter 2,) mentions a similar oak tree which formerly existed in that village. "In the centre of the village, and near the church, is a square piece of ground vulgarly called the Plestor. (Playgarth.) In the midst of this spot stood in old times a vast oak, with a short squat body, and huge horizontal arms extending almost to the extremity of the area. This venerable tree, surrounded with stone steps, and seats above them, was the delight of old and young, and a place of much resort in summer evenings; where the former sat in grave debate, while the latter frolicked and danced before them."

¹⁰ Vid. Taliesin. Cerdd: Daronwy, Dav. Dru. p. 299.

¹¹ Vid. Taliesin. Cerdd. Robora numinis instar. Claud. in Const. Stilich. l. 1.

¹² This represented the central tree in the garden of Eden, and was a transcript of a similar superstition all over the world. Isaiah (c. 66, v. 17.) gives a curious illustration of this practice as used by the idolaters for purification.

¹³ Probably from an old tradition of the trees of knowledge and life (Gen. c. 3. v. 5, 22) for it is certain that the ideas of *science* and *immortality* were combined in this sacred tree.

the largest was preserved, and so constructed as to exhibit the form of the Tau Cross ; and when practicable, three arms were retained, as in the Dorrington Oak, to represent the triad of deity ; in which case its sanctity was considerably increased.

THE DEMON BUILDERS.

The hill on which Dorrington is built was a beacon of great importance from the superior advantages of its situation. The eastern horizon was bounded by the German ocean ; the north by Lincoln ; the west by the cliffs which form a lofty ridge stretching through the whole county of Lincoln, from the Humber, near its junction with the Trent, to Stamford, and south by the high country skirting those fens near Threckingham, which extend into Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire and part of Northamptonshire. From this high place of Daronwy the appearances were calculated to produce reverence and fear ; for the worshippers would behold their deity the Sun, rising out of those waters which, according to their traditions, had once deluged the world ; attaining its meridian height in glory ; and casting its setting shadows amongst the hills which terminated the line of western observation. And the periodical festivals of Beiltime and Samhin, the one to celebrate the return of that beneficent luminary ; the other to kindle the fire of peace, were solemnized with appropriate pomp and splendour. Here superstition would claim and receive from its votaries the most abject homage ; and inspire them with the highest degree of awe which a mysterious religion was capable of impressing on an uneducated mind ; for this was the polluted scene of those public sacrifices, not only in British but in Saxon times, when the blood of men was poured out like water, and the sanguinary deities propitiated by a lavish waste of human life. Here they offered their sons and daughters unto devils (who hence acquired a high degree of veneration, based in fear and upheld by terror,) which were represented by visible stones erect, within or near to a circular temple of upright stones, that had engrossed the affections of this race, until their attachment to the hallowed precinct had so completely absorbed every other feeling, that nothing was able to subdue it.

Some time after the Britons had been finally conquered, and the Saxons converted to christianity ; on a heavenly morning in the spring time of the year, there stood upon Dorrington hill, in a reclining posture, against the stones which formed the ancient temple of the deity, two persons, meanly clad, in a close vest reaching to the knee, like the coarse linen slop of our agricultural labourers, but tall of stature and of a majestic presence,

apparently engaged in deep and earnest conversation. The sun shone brightly over their heads, the wind was hushed, and all nature appeared to enjoy a sweet repose. One of these individuals was the descendant of a British chief who had lost his life in the unsuccessful struggle which he made for the liberty and independence of his tribe; the other was a Bard who still adhered to the fallen fortunes of his lord, and devoted himself to his service in the midst of poverty and disgrace; for he was now compelled to labour for his subsistence, in cultivating the lands which were formerly his own. They were employed in bemoaning their abject state under the domination of the Saxon yoke.

"The council have at length determined," said the chief, "to erect a chapel in the village yonder for the practice of their new fangled worship."

"The varlets," exclaimed the bard; "and to remove this ancient temple, almost the only relic they have left us of the piety of our forefathers, and convert these sacred stones to the base purpose of making a foundation for the structure. But if my gift of prophecy be not extinguished by the thralldom of my person,—in this instance they will be mistaken."

"What mean you?" enquired the chief.

"I mean," replied his companion, "to teach these proud upstarts a lesson of respect for the ancient deities of the country. I mean to display the power of Daronwy the mighty, amongst them; to turn their councils into naught, and scatter their wise decisions to the winds of heaven."

"I am still unable to comprehend you."

The bard continued. "The Saxon has torn from us our broad lands—he has violated the peace of our domestic hearth—he has polluted our altars, and cast our temples to the ground—he has made slaves of our people, profaned the sacred persons of our kings with whips and scourges, and committed their remains to the grave without the honours of the funeral dirge. He has left us indeed the inclination for vengeance, but it is impotent, for he has divested us of the power. This consecrated hill, however, shall not be alienated from its primitive design. The holy precinct may be invaded, but if they erect a temple, here it shall stand or no where."

More he would have said, for the inspiration of the poet was coming over him, but he was interrupted by the appearance of a horseman riding gently up the hill. He was clad in a rich cloak, lined with furs and bordered with embroidery, and fastened with a brilliant clasp before; and his horse's trappings corresponded with the magnificence of his own dress. He held a hawk on his hand, and was attended by a train of servants on foot, some of whom exhibited beautiful specimens of the same bird. This was Tohti, the Saxon lord of the soil, who resided in the hall at Ruskington; and was proceeding towards the high lands in quest of game, accompanied by a lady who rode astride upon her palfrey and bore on her finger a milk white falcon. No sooner did the Thane espy the two British slaves dwelling on their grievances, than he pricked his palfrey into a canter, and addressed them in the language of angry admonition.

"Away, away, ye knaves—to your work! Why idle ye? To your work, or whips and shackles await ye!"

Expostulation was useless, and the Britons, muttering threats, took their way to the village.

The stones were now removed from their ancient resting place on the hill, and being hewn into convenient pieces for the foundations of the Chapel; were deposited with much ceremony on an ancient mound, in the centre of the village, adjoining the Playgarth, and near the venerated Oak Tree; and in celebration of the solemnity the Thane made a great feast for his tenants and retainers, and the carousal was protracted long after the hour of midnight.

The next morning, who can express the consternation of the villagers when they discovered that the foundations had been torn up and carried no one knew whither. Tidings were conveyed to the Thane, who, cursing the mischance that had disturbed the repose by which he sought to carry off the effects of his evening's debauch, hasted to the spot, and was confounded at beholding the empty trenches which had contained the foundations of his chapel on the preceding night. The total ignorance which was professed respecting this mysterious event, ruffled his temper, and he was rising by degrees into a storm of passion against the varlets who had permitted, by their negligence, such a daring robbery to be perpetrated; when a serf came running at full speed down the hill, and

announced the incredible intelligence that the foundations were laid in a workmanlike manner on the very spot from whence the old temple had been removed.

Orders were instantly given to convey the materials once more to the village. A greater number of men were employed, and before the shades of evening put a period to the work, the walls were raised to some height above the surface of the ground. It was of no avail. The ensuing morning, every particle was found compactly put together in the same place upon the hill. This was so extraordinary, that the builders simultaneously pronounced it to be the devil's work; and in a panic, trembled in anticipation of the disastrous consequences which might ensue if they should have the temerity to interfere with his supernatural labours.

The Thane was at his wits end; but he was not yet vanquished. He endeavoured to reason, but conjecture only served to inflame his rage; and at length in a passion he swore that no fiend or devil should baffle his wishes or defeat his project. It was a vain oath. He repeated the process; he set a trusty servant to watch the vexatious proceedings of the coming night, and to detect treachery if any existed. No matter. The sentinel slept, and the incipient building was again removed to the summit of the hill. Not to be out done in perseverance, Tohti summoned all his vassals and retainers and made a final attempt to erect his church on the appointed site; but the same result followed; and one of his chief officers, to induce his lord to desist, furnished him with the following information, invented probably for the purpose, which convinced him that it would be in vain to contend any longer against the power and craft of his ghostly opponent.

"To satisfy myself," said the officer, "of the agency which produced these extraordinary circumstances, I resolved to keep a strict and secret watch upon the premises, and for that purpose, I stationed myself betimes in the evening behind the Three Grained Oak of Daron. The moon rode majestically through the sky, and her silver lamp was of its brightest lustre. All was silent as the grave, and I stood in the deep shade of the oak tree, enchanted with the sublime beauty of the sight. Time advanced, and the stillness became, as I fancied, somewhat interrupted by the sound of fitful murmurs which resembled the confusion of many human voices, speaking in wild disorder; but they appeared at so great a distance, as only lightly

to meet my ear. I was uncertain in what direction the sounds proceeded; but they approached gradually nearer and nearer, and the indistinct buzz ripened into the noise of a great body of people intent on some very extraordinary undertaking. Still I saw nothing, though it now became evident that a multitude was at my elbow, for my ears were deafened with a multiplicity of uncouth sounds, amongst which I could distinctly hear voices calling out for implements of mechanical labour. They seemed however to rise from the ground beneath my feet, and I began to feel a strange sensation of fear creep over me, and to regret that I had ever been fool enough to undertake an adventure fraught with so much peril. I was allowed very little time to reflect; for suddenly Daron's oak yawned like some mighty giant, and out of the fissure issued a vast number of dwarfish monsters of every frightful shape and form. Each was distinguished either by his blubber lips, fiery mouth, scabby face, beetle head, sharp teeth, long chin, hump shoulders, big belly, bandy legs or tail; and all were furnished with heads of enormous magnitude, utterly disproportionate to the diminutive size of their bodies. Some were provided with spades, others with pickaxes, and they had every necessary implement for the completion of their design. Fortunately they did not discover my hiding place, but proceeded without delay towards the chapel. The foundations were taken up in a very short space of time, and I was witness to incredible specimens of gigantic strength which excited my admiration and astonishment. The beams of timber, and stones of immense size were carried up the hill by these wicked imps with as much ease as I can wield my boar spear; and they hurried past the spot where I stood ensconced, in droves, each bearing a burden that ten of our strongest British slaves would sink under the weight of. And it was all accompanied with an elritch gibber and a chitter that made the blood run cold to my heart. Their work was soon finished. The foundations were deposited on the hill, and the demon builders returned in merry confusion to Daron's oak, which opened at the pronunciation of some cabbalistic word, and received them within its capacious trunk. The gibbering noise at their entrance was astounding, but the oak closed its monstrous jaws upon them; the noises gradually receded and decreased—they dwindled to a whisper, and finally died away; and I found myself alone amidst a profound silence, the moon sailing in the liquid ether, and the dews of heaven congealing upon the grass."

This account, taken from the mouth of a confidential servant, silenced

the Thane's opposition, and he allowed the foundations to remain in the situation thus miraculously chosen.

The building was suffered to proceed, and hence the church became placed at its present distance from the village by the agency, according to popular tradition, of the devil. This primitive edifice was constructed but slightly, and fell before the Danish ravages in Kesteven, but superstition had consecrated the spot, and the people of a succeeding age, warned by ideal terrors of the danger of interfering with a locality thus preternaturally selected, built a more permanent structure on the same holy site; and the distant villagers were called to prayer by means of a bell, which was suspended from the branch of a tree that grew near to the mound where Tohti first laid the foundations of his projected church. Generation after generation were swept away, but still the iron tongued monitor kept its place, as if in mockery of the ephemeral race by which it was surrounded; and was ultimately removed only a few years ago. The site of Tohti's building is now marked by a conical mound of earth surrounded by the shaft of a cross, but it retains the significant appellation of Chapel Hill.

G chap. 2.—note 48.

Many years ago the old inhabitants of Anwick remember a huge stone, in shape an irregular oval, and in dimensions gigantic, which occupied the centre of an elevated space in the open field, and excited in every age various speculations and conjectures on its original; for it is a clay country, and no stone of any description is found underneath the soil. There was, however, a running tradition that it was placed there to indicate the presence of treasure which had been buried on the spot. But by whom it was hidden, and when, were questions which none could resolve. I strove long and anxiously to get possession of this fact; but all my endeavours ended in disappointment. Nobody could tell. The traditions of the place were preserved with tolerable accuracy, but none knew the circumstances which induced the interment of the gold.

Like all other hidden treasure, this secret hoard was reputed to be under the especial protection of the devil;—that a subterranean cave had been constructed by incantations beneath the stone for his residence, and there the guardian demon was always to be found—if wanted. But none were willing to subscribe to his terms for possession of the treasure, al-

though many were the endeavours of individuals to come at it furtively. All were unsuccessful. Either they could not find the bottom of the stone—or the excavation they had made became suddenly and supernaturally filled with water—or the gold eluded their grasp at the moment of success by some unaccountable and indescribable means—at any rate no progress was ever made towards the discovery; and at length a determined fellow of the name of Roberts, was resolved to accomplish that by force which art was insufficient to attain. He collected together a numerous yoke of oxen to draw the stone from its place; and they strained so hard at the task that the chains snapped, and the attempt proved abortive; although the guardian spirit of the stone appears to have taken alarm at the project, for at the moment when the chains broke, a fearful noise was heard to issue from the foundation of the stone, and the demon suddenly made his appearance in the shape of a drake, to the great consternation of the persons present, and flying over the champagne country, he disappeared in a cloud of smoke.

This unquestionable evidence of the devil's presence, converted the Drake Stone into an object of superstitious dread, and the natives were afraid of encountering its terrors in the dark; for it is a well attested axiom in the science of diablerie, that his anger is always roused into fury when his consecrated hoards have been disturbed.

Strange legends now began to be whispered abroad amongst the peasantry respecting certain awful appearances that were seen hovering about the mysterious precinct. Shadowy forms—now invisible, and now indistinctly seen, played their mystical gambols by moonlight. Sounds were heard, supposed to be more than human, and the departing shadows of the western sun warned the shepherd of his danger if he approached too near the scene of these nocturnal celebrations. Such is the voice of tradition, and it has been a fruitful source of amusement to wile away an hour by the fire side on a dreary winter's evening. Many a youngster's hair has stood erect at the recital "like quills upon the fretful porcupine;" and retiring to bed in terror, the very quacking of a duck at dead of night has conjured up visions of darkness that banished sleep from his pillow.

One memorable evening, about a hundred years ago—it was verging towards the morn—when the clear orb of night was sailing in its radiance through the heavens, and shedding her silvery beams with subdued light

over hill and valley ; a peasant had occasion to pass within sight of the Drake stone in his way home, having been detained by indispensable duties amongst his flock till that untimely hour. His fears were already excited by reflecting on the fables he had heard about the midnight revels of imps and demons ; and he passed by without daring to look towards the object of his apprehensions ; trembling with dread, but whistling to inspire his heart with courage. Whether his endeavours were successful, the tradition does not say ;—certain it is, that after sundry inward deliberations, he mustered up a resolution to cast one lingering glance behind, when he had calculated his distance with sufficient accuracy to be out of the supposed reach of danger, and he saw two human figures, which by their shadows in the moonlight appeared to his excited eye, of gigantic size ; and beside them stood a monstrous quadruped with horns and claws. The men, if men they were who exhibited a stature far beyond the human proportions, were in active motion about the stone, but the monster was quiescent. He fancied he saw the soil removed, but it was only a sudden glance, and as the moon at that very moment, was cast into shadow by a passing cloud, he could not say for certain, whether it was so or not. It might be simply a reflection of the moon's beams ; but he certainly thought he saw the swing of a monstrous pickaxe, and heard the dead sound of the stroke reverberate upon his heart. He made the best of his way to his master's kitchen, and astonished his fellow servants by the marks of terror and alarm which were exhibited in his pallid countenance. But when he explained the causes of his agitation his rustic audience were paralyzed. The maids turned pale, and sank down upon their seats before the kitchen fire ; and the cheeks of some stout fellows were blanched with fear. At length several voices put the question, "*what, didst to'see ?*"

"I've seen the devil and his imps," roared out the terrified rustic. "He was in the shape of a great four legged dragon, and flames of fire flashed all round him ; and a great, tall devil with a pickaxe, was knocking down the Drake stone."

"Talk of pick axes," said a brawny fellow in the corner, whose blue slop and weather beaten countenance promised to be a match for all the devils in Christendom. "Talk of pickaxes ; do you think the devil has need of a pickaxe to overturn that stone, when a single whisk of his tail

would knock down church and steeple. No, no, if a pickaxe were used, he is no devil depend on't." And with that he left the room.

Meantime the commotion within continued. An exaggerated account of the horrors of the Drake stone worked the maid servants into hystericks; and to say the truth the poor fellow himself was not in a much better state. As if he had been a practised retailer of horrors, he told and retold his tale, every gradation fraught with new and terrific images, till he worked up his feelings to a state of absolute frenzy, and he was put to bed in a violent fever. The family caught the infection, and never was mental agitation so victorious in a quiet household, since the village of Anwick had its name.

The bluff fellow in the blue slop however was possessed of too much nerve to be frightened at shadows. He went boldly forward and found two strange men busily employed in endeavouring to fathom the bottom of the Drake stone in search of the gold which tradition had placed there. They dug till day light warned them to be gone, under the scrutinizing superintendence of this Anwick man. Their labours were unsuccessful; and the panniers of their ass, which expectation had loaded with imaginary treasure, returned quite empty. The strangers departed, and the countryman sought his pallet.

A few years afterwards the whole village was in a panic. The Drake stone had disappeared in dead of night and the place where it stood was occupied by a placid pool of water. This unlooked for incident furnished matter for new and various speculations, in which the prince of darkness bore a prominent character. Even men of sense and education were puzzled. They had seen it on the preceding day standing on the ground which it had occupied for centuries, and now it was evidently gone. This extraordinary occurrence was subsequently explained. For when the drought of the succeeding summer had evaporated the contents of the mysterious pool, the upper part of the stone was visible at about three or four feet beneath the surface; and the only intelligible conjecture which then offered itself was, that successive money diggers, while labouring in their vocation, had excavated so deeply as to loosen the foundation on which the Drake stone rested, and thus giving way, it became buried in the abyss which they had made. This, however, though true, was not the whole truth.

To restore this massive stone to its former position in the face of such a series of awful prophecies and events, was altogether out of the question. The hole was therefore filled in with soil by the occupier, and the site brought into cultivation by the plough. This was about thirty years ago.

In the year 1832, a gentleman passing through the village of Anwick, made some enquiry into the traditions respecting the Drake stone. The result was unsatisfactory. One told him it was oval; another said it was square; a third that it resembled a stone coffin; and the account which he received of its magnitude varied considerably amongst the different individuals whom he consulted. To all appearance the stone and its traditions were lost. At length accident threw him in the way of an individual who appeared somewhat more clear in his description of the stone, and he ended with boldly saying—"Now, sir, as I have gone thus far, you shall see the stone if you chuse."

The offer was of course accepted, and accompanying this man to the spot, he struck his spade into the ground, and exclaimed,—“this is the place, sir, where we shall find the Drake stone.”

And he was right; for after he had made an excavation of about four or five feet in depth, his spade struck upon the identical object of his search.

“There it is, sir, and there it must remain; for if the various money diggers who have endeavoured to find its bottom, have departed without accomplishing their object; if Roberts with his yoke of oxen was unable to move it, when it stood six feet out of the ground, how can it be taken up now it lies buried five feet deep?”

He said this because the stranger had intimated a wish to see the relic disinterred.

“No, sir; it is surely protected by — you know who!” And he looked round with an appearance of apprehension; “and,” throwing in the soil as he spoke, “depend upon it the bottom will never be found by man.”

In spite of these discouraging inuendos the gentleman called at the vicarage, for the stone stood on church property, and the Reverend In-

cumbent at once consented to use his endeavours to bring this mysterious stone once more to light. The attempt was made, and it succeeded. The stone was easily taken up, and its present appearance has put every tradition to shame; for after all that had been circulated amongst the inhabitants about excavations of considerable depth being frequently made without discovering any indications of the bottom, it was certainly not more than two feet below the surface when those experiments were made. And being superincumbent on another large stone, which was removed by the latest adventurers in quest of gold; its sudden submersion is rationally accounted for.

The legends have, therefore, a reference to observances of remote antiquity.

H. chap. 2.—note 49.

The abstract idea of a witch in the middle ages, was, that the "demon and the witch combined their various powers of doing harm, to inflict calamities upon the person and property, the fortune and the fame, of innocent human beings, imposing the most horrible diseases, and death itself, as marks of their slightest ill will; transforming their own person and those of others at their pleasure; raising tempests to ravage the crops of their enemies, or carrying them home to their own garners, annihilating or transferring to their own dairies the produce of herds; spreading pestilence among cattle; infesting and blighting children; and, in a word, doing more evil than the heart of man might be supposed capable of conceiving, by means far beyond human power to accomplish."¹⁴ It is under this idea that we must consider the popular opinions respecting the Witch of the Heath. In early times, this witch was a terrific being. She had her abode in a cave within the parish of Fulbeck, where she daily gave suck to her familiars, to whom tradition has assigned the appellation of "cubs." In her wrath she visited the towns and villages with storms and tempests; and wiled away children to her den, when she held them in confinement to furnish herself with food, and her demon master with subjects. When children were not to be had, she invaded church yards, and with her attendant ghoul, regaled herself on the half putrid flesh of disinterred bodies, from which also she collected her materials for magical incantations. She was in the habit of inflicting summary punishment on any person who had the temerity to approach within the precincts of her

¹⁴ Scott, Demon. p. 72.

cave; from which such horrible noises were sometimes heard, that no person dared to pass by after sunset, lest he should be torn in pieces. Her transformations were so numerous, that if a strange dog appeared in a farmer's yard, it was immediately pronounced to be the witch, and every expedient was resorted to, pursuant with the current traditions of the period, to purchase safety by extracting blood from its body. She often amused herself with soaring above the tempest in perfect security, mounted on a broom stick, to the great terror of the beholders; and a vicious horse or a distempered cow, was considered the victim of her infernal spells, which were concocted at

Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,
The time of night when Troy was set on fire;
The time when scritch-owls cry, and ban-dogs howl,
And spirits walk and ghosts break up their graves.¹⁵

Her malice was not merely displayed in the unimportant tricks of an hag of after ages, who appears to have confined her power to the simple acts of teasing and perplexing her innocent neighbours; but her injuries were deep and indelible, and produced wailing and distress amongst the adjacent population. Tradition has preserved a fearful account of the terror which she inspired, but has failed to transmit more than a general record of her transgressions. The closing adventure of her life is, however, well remembered, and visible attestations of it still remain.

To abate so terrible a scourge to the country, her destruction was resolved on by a hero, whose name has not been handed down to us. He was a person of tried courage, for as these incidents occurred in the age of heroes and club law, the witch could only be subdued by force of arms. He took his war horses to a pond near the Hermen-street, for the purpose of ascertaining, by divination, which of the steeds would be most fortunate on the present occasion. While they were drinking, he took up a large stone and cast it into the lake accompanied by a secret petition to the gods, that the chosen steed might raise his head from the water, and display symptoms of impatience for action. A horse called Biard, answered the summons; and the warrior, armed with his naked sword only, mounted without hesitation. Arriving at the mouth of the cave, he called to the

¹⁵ Shakespeare.

sorceress to come forth ; and received an immediate answer in the following words ;

“I must suckle my cubs,
I must buckle my shoes,
And then I will give you your supper.”

When she made her appearance, the horseman, without parley, commenced an attack upon her, by a blow with his sword, that struck off her left breast ; but the witch, by a sudden bound, evading a second stroke, fixed her talons so deeply in Biard's flank, that the animal became restive, and endeavoured to escape by a series of prodigious leaps, *three of which, at least sixty yards asunder, are still marked by the impressions of his feet.*

This conflict is perfectly in keeping with the known character of the northern heroes ; for “to incur the highest extremity of danger was accounted a proof of that insuperable valour for which every Northman desired to be famed ; and their annals afford numerous instances of encounters with ghosts, witches, furies, and fiends, whom the champions compelled to submit to their mere mortal strength.”¹⁶

The witch died from her wound, and was buried at the intersection of the cross roads ; and to prevent her re-appearance, an immense stone was placed upon her body, which remains to the present day.

I. chap. 2.—note 51.

Justs and Tournaments were annually held by the nobility and the knights of Temple Bruer, on Lincoln Heath, by Royal Patent.¹⁷ The frequency of their occurrence produced irregularities and disorders that attracted the notice of government, and a public writ for their prohibition, in the following sharp terms, was addressed to John de Cormil, High Sheriff of the County. “Rex Vicecomiti Lincolnæ salutem. Præcipimus tibi, firmiter injungentes, quod statim visis præsentibus, per totam ballivam tuam, in civitatibus burgis, et locis aliis quibus melius videris expedire, publice proclamari, et districte ex parte nostra facias inhiberi, nequi *sub forisfactura vitæ et membrorum, terrarum et tenementorum, bonorum et catallorum suorum*, ac omnium illorum quæ nobis forisfacere poterunt, torneamenta, justas aut burdeicias facere, seu aliter infra ballivam tuam

16. Sir Walter Scott's *Demonol.* p. 101.

17. *Rot. Pat.* 18. Edw. III. p. l. m. 44.

ad arma ire præsumant, set se præparent quanto potentius poterunt, ad proficiscendum nobiscum in obsequium nostrum ad partes Scociæ, ad rebellionem et nequiciam quorundam Scotorum, rebellium et proditorum nostrorum, jam contra nos prodicionaliter insurgencium, viriliter, cum Deo et ipsorum adjutorio, reprimendam ; Ita quod omnes homines ad arma balliva tua, quilibet videlicet juxta exigenciam Status sui, sint ad nos cum equis et armis apud Karliolum, in quindena nativitatis Sancti Johannes Baptistæ proximo futura ad ultimum, ad apponendum una nobiscum, et cum consimilibus fidelibus nostris, quos tunc nobiscum ibidem adesse contigerit, super negociis statim terræ nostræ Scociæ tangentibus, prout nobis altissimus duxerit inspirandum consilium et juvamen. Præcipimus eciam tibi, quod si qui vel quis torneamenta, justas aut burdeicias, contra hanc inhibitionem nostram, infra ballivam tuam facere, seu aliter ad arma ire præsumant vel præsumat, tunc corpora ipsorum vel ipsius, quos vel quem delinquentes vel delinquentem inveneris in hac parte, sine dilatione capias, et in prisona nostra salvo custodias, donec aliud inde præciperimus. Et nos de hiis quæ facienda duxeris in præmissis, in crastino Sanctæ Trinitatis proximo futuro reddos distincte et aperte certiores, hoc breve nobis remittentes. T. Rege apud Wolveseye vi die Aprilis.”¹⁸

J. chap. 2.—note 52.

Philip Stubbs, in his *Anatomie of Abuses*, printed in 1595 gives the following account of the Lord of Misrule. “First of all, the wilde heades of the parish flocking together, chuse them a graunde captaine of mischiefe, whom they innoble with the title of Lord of Misrule; and him they crown with great solemnity, and adopt for their king. This king annoynted chuseth forth twentie, fourty, three score or a hundred lustie guttes like to himself, to waite upon his lordly majesty, and to garde his noble person. Then every one of these men he investeth with his liveries of greene, yellow, or some other light wanton colour, and as though they were not gaudy ynough they bedecke themselves with scarffes, ribbons, and laces, hanged all over with gold ringes, pretious stones and other jewels. This done, they tie aboute either legge twentie or fourtie belles, with rich handkerchiefs in their handes, and sometimes laide acrossse over their shoulders and neckes, borrowed, for the most part, of their pretie mopsies and loving Bessies. Thus all thinges set in order, then have they their hobby-horses, their dragons, and other antiques, together with their baudie pipers, and

¹⁸. Claus. 34 Edw. III, m. 16.

thundring drummers to strike up the devil's daunce withal. Then march this heathen company towards the church, their pypers pyping, their drummers thundring, their stumpes dauncing, their belles jynghing, their handkerchiefs fluttering aboute their heades like maddemen, their hobbie horses and other monsters skirmishing amongst the throng: and in this sorte they go to the church, though the minister be at prayer or preaching, dauncing and singing like devils incarnate, with such a confused noise that no man can heare his owne voyce. Then the foolish people they looke, they stare, they laugh, they fleere, and mount upon the formes and pewes to see these goodly pageants solemnized. Then after this, aboute the church they go againe and againe, and so fourthe into the churche yard, where they have commonly their sommer halls, their bowers, arbours, and banquetting houses set up, wherein they feast, banquet, and daunce all that day, and paradventure all that night too, and thus these terrestrial furies spend the sabbath day. Then for the further innobling of this honourable lardane, lord I should say, they have certain papers wherein is painted some babelerie or other of imagerie worke, and these they call my Lord of Misrule's badges or cognizances. These they give to every one that will give them money to maintain them in this their heathenish devilrie; and who will not show himselfe buxome to them and give them money, they shall be mocked and flouted shamefully; yea, and many times carried upon a cowl staffe, and dived over heade and eares in water, or otherwise most horribly abused. And so besotted are some, that they not only give them money, but weare their badges or cognizances in their hates or cappes openly.— Another sorte of fantastick fooles bring to these helhounds, the Lord of Misrule and his complices, some bread, some good ale, some new cheese, some old cheese, some custardes, some cracknels, some cakes, some flauns, some tarts, some cream, some meat, some one thing and some another."

K. chap. 2.—note 53.

The same Philip Stubbs gives the following description of church Ales. "In certain townes," say he, "where drunken Bacchus bears swaie against Christmass and Easter, Whitsunday or some other time; the churchwardens, for so they call them, of every parish, with the consent of the whole parish, provide half a score or twentie quarters of mault, whereof some they buy of the church stocke, and some is given to them of the parishioners themselves, every one conferring somewhat, according to his ability; which mault being made into very strong ale, or beer, is set to sale, either in the church or in some other place assigned to that purpose.

Then, when this nippitatum, this huffe cappe, as they call it, this nectar of life, is set abroad, well is he that can get the soonest to it and spends the most at it, for he is counted the godliest man of all the rest, and most in God's favour, because it is spent upon his church forsooth. If all be true which they say, they bestow that money which is got thereby for the repaire of their churches and chappels; they buy bookes for the service, cupps for the celebration of the sacrament, surplusses for Sir John, and such other necessaries as may be required."

L. chap. 2.—note 55.

Holk Tuesday was the tuesday fortnight after Easter day; and is generally supposed to have been instituted on the relief which Englishmen had from the oppression of the Danes by Hardicanute. It was a merry festival, at which the female part of the community reigned paramount. The men and women, with great glee, on this day, stopped the streets with long ropes, and entangling the passengers, kept them in durance until they purchased their redemption by a small fine; and the stock thus acquired was expended in a supper. In the above feat, the girls were the most active, and always produced the greatest share of the booty.

M. chap. 2.—note 61.

There are many innocent and useful customs, still in existence, which may be traced to the Roman Catholic period; and one in particular I would here notice which is common in many market towns in Lincolnshire. I allude to a practice which arose out of the observance of the tide songs, which were regulated by a canon of Elfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, according to the hours of the day. The Ught song was to be sung early in the morning; the Prime song at 7 o'clock; the Undern song at 9 o'clock; the Midday song at 12 o'clock; the None song at 3 o'clock; the Night song at 9 o'clock; and the Midnight service at 12. In conformity with this latter custom, it is usual in some places on Christmas day at the same hour, to commence a peal upon the bells. "This ringing," says Peck, "19 shews that in popish times, on Christmas day, all the kingdom rose to nocturns. As courtiers congratulate kings on their birthdays, they then thought it a piece of religion to pay their duty to the king of kings on his." It is also a custom for the church singers to perambulate the towns at midnight on Christmas Eve, and sing a psalm at every door where they expect

a present as a Christmas box. And they generally conclude with wishing a merry christmas and happy new year. The method of celebrating Christmas at this period was by a series of personifications which are thus described by Ben Johnson in one of his masques for the court.

“*Enter CHRISTMAS, with two or three of the guard.* He is attired in round hose, long stockings, a close doublet, a high crowned hat, with a broach, a long thin beard, a truncheon, little ruffs, white shoes, his scarfs and garters tied cross, and his drum beaten before him.

The names of his children, with their attires.

Miss-Rule, in a velvet cap with a sprig, a short cloak, great yellow ruff like a reviller; his torch bearer bearing a rope, a cheese, and a basket.

Caroll, a long tawny coat with a red cap, and a ffute at his girdle; his torch bearer carrying a song book open.

Mine'd-pie, like a fine cook's wife, dressed neat, her man carrying a pie, dish, and spoons.

Gamboll, like a tumbler, with a hoop and bells; his torch bearer armed with cole-staff, and blinding cloth.

Post and Pair, with a pair-royal of aces in his hat, his garment all done over with pans and purs; his squire carrying a box, cards, and counters.

New-year's-gift, in a blue coat, serving man like, with an orange, and a sprig of rosemary gilt on his head, his hat full of broaches, with a collar of gingerbread; his torch bearer carrying a march-pain, with a bottle of wine on either arm.

Mumming, in a masquing pie'd suit, with a visor; his torch bearer carrying the box, and ringing it.

Wassal, like a neat sempster and songster; her page bearing a brown bowl, drest with ribbands, and rosemary before her.

Offering, in a short gown, with a porter's staff in his hand; a wyth borne before him, and a bason, by his torch bearer.

Baby Cocke, drest like a boy, in a fine long coat, biggin, bib, muckender, and a little dagger; his usher bearing a great cake, with a bean and pease.”

N. chap 2.—note 63.

These processions and pageants went very much out of fashion after the reign of Elizabeth. When her successor, James I, visited Lincoln, the preparations for his entertainment were of a very different character; as appears from the following account extracted from Nichol's Royal Progresses.

The manner of King James's first coming to Lincoln, March 27 1617.

Memorandum, that his Majesty being to come to this City, the Mace bearer was sent to the Lord Chamberlain, at Grantham, for direction, when, where, and in what manner, Mr. Mayor and the Citizens should meet his Majesty, who returned answer, that his Majesty was intended that night to rest at St. Catherine's, [Priory near the Bar-gates, at the south entrance of Lincoln,] and the day following to come into the City; and that therefore the Sheriffs, with some number of Citizens in gowns, should meet his Highness at the skirts of the County, [of the City] and so the day following, the mayor and his brethren, with convenient company of citizens, to meet him at the Barr-gate, and, then, and not before, to have some Speech to his Majesty, for that his Highness did not love long Speeches.

The king comes to St. Katherine's.

Whereupon, the 27th day of March, 1617, anno 15 Regis Jacobi, King James did come from Grantham to Lincoln, but the appointed place for meeting his Majesty at the skirts of the county was not observed by reason his Majesty hunted along the heath, and came not the high way, and so the Sheriffs [William Solomon and Roger Beck] and citizens removed from that place. And they, with either of them a white staff in his hand, clad in cloth gowned of purple in grayne, and on horseback with foot-cloths, together with all of note which had been Sheriffs, on horseback, with foot cloths and black gowns all of the antientest fashion; and all that had been Chamberlains of note, on horseback, in their gowns, of one fashion, of violet colour without foot cloths; and divers other Citizens in cloaks of like colour, booted and spurred, on horseback, with new javelings in their hands, fringed with red and white, being set in order by one of his Majesty's officers, who came before his Majesty's coming to that end, two and two in a rank were appointed to stand in the highway near the Cross of the the Cliffe, [which stood without Bargate,] where his Majesty could not misse of them, the Sheriffs being hindmost. And when his Majesty drew neare them, the two Sheriffs only lighted, and way made for them, they both went to his Majesty in his caroché, and kneeling, the elder Sheriff delivered his staff first, and the king delivered it him again, and the other Sheriff did the like; and so both took horse again, and rid both bare-headed before the Caroché. The High Sheriff of the county [Sir Francis South, of Kelstern,] and his men, by the king's officers, then were put by,

and the other Citizens in their degrees, before the Sheriffs, rid all bare-headed before his Majesty, conducting and attending him to his lodging at St. Catherine's.

The King's Entrance into the City, the Second Day.

On the next day his Majesty coming to the Bargate in his caroché, he there lighted, and took his horse caparisoned of state, being most rich, where the Mayor, [Robert Mason] the Recorder, and his Brethren, the Sheriffs, and other Citizens aforementioned, in their rank and attire aforesaid, attended him on horseback and foot-cloths; the Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes, with every of them a man to attend him on foot in civil liveries much-what all alike. His Majesty came toward the Mayor and Recorder, who were both lighted, and on foot, hard under the houses on the West side of the street within the Barr-gates; and the Mayor readily on his knee kneeling tendered the Sword to deliver it to his Majesty, but his Majesty put the Sword back with the back of his hand with all grace, refused to take it from the Mayor. Then the King's Majesty asked the Mayor if he had any Speech to deliver, who answered, "No, but this Gentleman who is our Recorder, hath one;" and the King willed, "Say on." So the Recorder, kneeling all the time upon his knees uttered his Speech, which his Majesty heard willingly and with great commendations. Which ended, the Mayor delivered his Majesty a goodly enamelled and gilt silver Cup of a full elne in height, in weight a C marks in silver or thereabouts, which the King took with great delight and content, and moving his hat thanked them, and delivered it to one of his footmen to carry openly in his hand all the way to the Minster, and thence conveyed it to his lodging.

The Cavalcade up the Town to the Minster.

After the Cup delivered, the Mayor mounted, with the Sword in his hand, and placed betwixt the Serjeants at Mace, did bear the Sword before the King to the Minster, and the Earl of Rutland, being Lieutenant of the County, did bear the King's Sword, all the said Aldermen, Sheriffs, and other Citizens in their ranks, youngest first, did ride, two and two together, up the High Street, through the Baile unto the Minster-gates at the west end thereof, where the King kneeled down on a cushion, which was there prepared, and prayed a short prayer, and so, under a canopy which was held over him by four or six Prebends in surplices went into the Quire,

and then sate by the Bishop's pue hanged about with rich hangings in a Chair all prayer-time ; Mr. Dean [Roger Parker D.D.] saying prayers, the Mayor holding up the Sword before him all prayer-time.

The King views the Church.

After prayers done, his Majesty went about the Church to see the antient monuments thereof, and so went into the Chapter-house to see it, and from thence to his caroché, and therein went towards his lodging at St. Catharine's down Potter's-gate Head ; Mr. Mayor bearing the Sword until he took caroché as well through Baile-close as church ; when he took caroché, his own Sword and all ornaments were put up. The Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens in their ranks as aforesaid, rid all before the caroché, and attended his Majesty on horseback to St. Catharine's House, where his Majesty at the door put off his hat and dismissed them.

The King goes to the Minster again, and heals fifty Persons of the Evil.

On Sunday being the 30th of March, his Majesty went to the Minster in his caroché, and at the West door met him three Bishops [Andrews, Montagu, and Neile,] and the Deane and Chapter, who made a short Speech. Mr. Mayor and his Brethren, Sheriffs, and other Citizens in their gownes, did then (as was directed them by the Lord Chamberlayne and his officers, for whom they had directions for all their carriage and doings,) go in their degrees before his Majesty by two and two in a rank untill the foremost came to the Quire door ; then they did divide their rank, and one stood still of one side, and another turned and stood still on the other, and so made a fair lane and way for his Majesty, to keep him from the presse of the people. And for order sake, first the Town Clerke, then the two Sheriffs, and after them the Aldermen in their rank by twos went along (betwixt the Citizens in the way they made) before his Majesty into the Quire, where the Bishop of Lincoln [Dr. Richard Neile] preached ; after which Sermon ended, the King healed to the number of fifty persons of the King's Evil. When he he had so done, the Citizens went before him in order as aforesaid unto the Bishop's Palace, whear he dined, and and after dynner his Majesty went in his caroch in private unto St. Catharines again.

Chancellor Eland preached before the King at St. Catharines. Fifty-three Persons healed.

On Tuesday, being the first of April, Mr. Ealand, one of the Masters in the Church, preached before his Majesty in his Chamber of Presents; whear after Sermon his Majestie did heal fifty-three of the King's Evil.

The King goes to a cocking, and to see a stage prize plaied.

On Wednesday being the second of April, his Majesty did come in his caroch to the sign of the George by the Stanbowe to see a cocking thear, when he appointed four cocks to be put on the pit together, which made his Majesty very merrie.

And from thence he went to the Spread Eagle to see a prise plaied thear, by a fensor of the City and a servant to some attendant in the Court, who made the challenge, when the fensor and schollers of the City had the better; on which his Majesty called for his porter, who called for the sword and buckler, and gave and receaved a broken paite, and others had hurts.

The Mayor and Aldermen petitioned the King about the Scouring the Fosse.

The King then entered his caroch at the inner gate, when the Mayor and Aldermen did crave answer to the Petition they delivered at the King's coming from the cocking, to whom the King turning, gave his hand to Mr. Maior and Mr. Hollingworth, Alderman, who kissed the same, and so rid forwards to St. Catherines.

A great Horse-race, a Hunting and a Race by the Hunters.

On Thursday thear was a great Horse-race on the Heath for a Cupp, where his Majesty was present, and stood on a scaffold the Citie had caused to be set up, and withal caused the Race a quarter of a mile longe to be raled and corded with rope and hoopes on both sides, whereby the people were kept out, and the horses that rouned were seen faire.

On Friday there was a great Hunting, and a Race by the horses which rid the seat for a golden suaffle; and a rae by three Irishmen and an Englishman, all which his Majesty did behold. The Englishman won the Race.

On the same day the King knighted at Lincoln, Sir Henry Bretton of Surrey; Sir Thomas Willoughby; Sir John Buck of Lincolnshire; and Sir William Wilmer of Northamptonshire.

The King goes to Newarke.

On Saturday after dynner, his Majesty went from St. Catherine's to Newark, at whose departure from St. Catherines Mr. Maior and his Brethren did give attendance at his coming forth of the Presents, and when he took his caroché in the miner court of St. Catherines, he gave forth his hand to the Maior, all the Aldermen, and the Towne Clarke, who all kissed the same; then he thanked them all, saying, "That if God lent him life, he would see them oftener," and so took his caroché and went forward that night to Newarke, Mr. Sheriffs riding before his caroché in their gownes with their white staves and ffoot-cloths, and men with jafflings (but no Citizens,) untill the hither end of Bracebridge bridge, whear they likewise took their leaves, and he moved his hat to them; and then the High Sheriff and his men received him at the further end of the Bridge, beyond the water, and so conducted him on his journey."

O. chap 2.—note 68.

From these sports proceed the Morris-dances of the present day which are still practised in this neighbourhood, though not with the zest of former times. This pastime is a combination of the ancient pageants and the morisco dance; and Maid Marian and the Fool are considered as indispensable appendages to the party. It is an antique piece of mummary, performed at Christmas, as a garbled vestige of the sports which distinguished the Scandinavian festival of Yule. The performers repeat a kind of dialogue in verse and prose which is intended to create mirth, and ends in a comic sword dance, and a plentiful libation of ale. This practice is thought to have been encouraged by our early Monarchs, with the design of keeping the people in good humour; and Mr. Handel was of opinion that the Morris dance was peculiarly adapted to the genius of the English people,²⁰ Mr. Cole in his MSS. now in the British Museum tells us that a party of Morris dancers from Grimsby in 1724, were so frightened by a storm of wind and rain, which overtook them between the villages of Laceby and Aylesby, that they took to their heels and scampered home with the utmost precipitation, under the apprehension, that the devil was about to punish them for playing the fool.

P. chap. 2.—note 90.

The mysteries were often performed by the monks and clergy in churches and monasteries, and generally on the sabbath day; and they were frequented like taverns and markets, as places of public amusement.

20. *Archæol.* vol. 1. p. 20.

Temporary scaffolds three stories high were erected for this purpose. On the uppermost stage, under a superb canopy, was placed God the Father and his attendant angels; on the next in gradation, the saints and holy men who had been canonized by the church; and the lowest story was occupied by mortals who were still in their probation. In the floor beneath was a hole to represent hell. It was a dark cavern, occasionally illuminated by fire and flames which issued from an enormous mouth, accompanied by the shrieks of souls in torment. In a mystery called Marie Magdalene, now in the Bodleian Library. MS. Digb. 133, one of the stage directions is, "Here enters the prynce of the devylls in a stage, with hell onderneath the stage." This picture of Hell is quite in keeping with ancient doctrine, for it is uniformly represented by the Fathers as a place of darkness. Thus one says, the Lord descending into the dark mist of Hades;²¹ another says, Hades is a dark place under the earth;²² a third, Christ coming to the house of Hades all full of mist and darkness.²³ Nicetas Coriates terms it the dark and dreadful house of Hades; and Phavorinus says that it is a place void of light and full of eternal darkness.²⁵ In the introductory essay to the Pageant of Mary Magdalene, published from the Digby MSS., in the Bodleian Library, by the Committee of the Abbotsford Club, are the following appropriate remarks on this subject:—"The stage appears to have been in the form of a tower, in which Satan was seated; and it should seem that this piece of machinery, evidently an addition to the Pageant vehicle, continued attached to it during the performance, for the bad angel there *enters into hell with thunder*, being, in all probability, the hell underneath the tower, which was represented by a monstrous mouth with a moveable jaw, which, when opened, shewed flames within; and into which Satan and his subordinate devils are finally disposed of; saying,

"Now to hell lett vs synkyn als
To our felaws blake."

M. Sismondi, in his splendid work on the Literature of the South, says, that at Florence on the first of May, 1304, "all the sufferings of hell were placed before the eyes of the people, at a horrible representation appointed for a festival day; the first idea of which was no doubt taken from the Inferno. The bed of the river Arno was to represent the gulph of hell; and all the variety of torments which the imagination of monks or of the poet had

21. Chrysost. de Resur. Serm. 7.

22. Eustath in 1 Iliad.

23. Nazian. in Christo patiente

24. Nic. Con. in Bal.

25. Phav. in verbo

invented, streams of boiling pitch, flames, ice, serpents, were inflicted on real persons, whose cries and groans rendered the illusion complete to the spectators." The Franciscan friars made good use of this machinery to frighten those with whom they were displeased; and they thus imitated the infernal regions. Towards the end of Lent, according to Menage,²⁶ they disposed a great quantity of small flint stones upon several boards over the wooden ceiling of their church; and on Ash Wednesday, as soon as the deacon, in singing our Saviour's Passion, had pronounced the words at which every body present prostrates himself to the ground, some of the novices who had been placed on the ceiling for that purpose, turned over these boards one after another; so that the stones falling down upon all parts of the ceiling, made such a prodigious and unaccountable noise, that the people were terrified beyond measure at such an unequivocal token of God's wrath. To confirm their power, visions and apparitions were resorted to, as may be seen in the Lives of the Saints. Some souls were said to have been seen standing up to the knees in burning brimstone; some up to the middle, and some still more wicked, up to the chin; others swimming in caldrons of melted lead, and devils pouring the metal down their throats, with many other terrifying stories.

Q. chap. 2.—note 102.

"There can be no doubt," says Mr. Hone,²⁷ from the *Biographia Dramatica*, "that Adam and Eve appeared on the stage naked. In the second pageant of the Coventry MS. at the British Museum, Eve on being seduced by the serpent, induces Adam to taste the forbidden fruit. He immediately perceives their nakedness, &c. Warton observes,²⁸ that this extraordinary spectacle was beheld by a numerous company of both sexes with great composure; they had the authority of Scripture for such a representation, and they gave matters just as they found them in the third chapter of Genesis. They are also naked in the Chester Mystery, and clothe themselves in the same way. The present age rejects as gross and indelicate those free compositions which our ancestors not only countenanced but admired. Yet in fact the morals of our forefathers were as strict and perhaps purer and sounder than our own, &c." The following is the substance and order of the former part of the play. God enters creating the world; he breathes life into Adam, leads him into Paradise, and opens his side while sleeping. Adam and Eve appear naked and not

26. Men. Dict. v. Rabater.

27. Myst. p. 220.

28. Warton vol. 1. p. 224.

ashamed, and the old serpent enters lamenting his fall. He converses with Eve. She eats of the forbidden fruit, and gives part to Adam. They propose, according to the stage direction, to make themselves *subligacula a foliis quibus tegamus pudenda*, cover their nakedness with leaves and converse with God. God's curse. The serpent *exit* hissing. They are driven from Paradise by four angels, and the cherubim with a flaming sword. Adam appears digging the ground and Eve spinning. Their children Cain and Abel enter. The former kills his brother. Adam's lamentation. Cain is banished, &c. (Baker. Biog. Dramat. vol. 2. p. 50.) According to the Jewish traditions, Adam's first wife was named Lilit, who being disobedient, and an eternal scold, left him, and flew up into the air by means of a magical incantation. She is taken for a nocturnal fury and an enemy to women in child-bed, and to new born babes; and is what the Latins call *Striges Lamiæ*. Hence on the birth of a son some superstitious Jews write upon small pieces of paper, which they lay in each corner of the mother's bedroom, the words, "Lilit begone," and the names of three guardian angels, as a charm to secure the child from hurt by any impious incantations.²⁹ The Mahometans believe that Adam and Eve, having been driven out of paradise for their disobedience, the one towards the east, the other towards the west, wandered up and down the earth for the space of a hundred and twenty years, doing penance all that while for their offence, and that at length they met and knew one another again on the mountain Arafate, which, for that reason, took its name from the Arabic word *arafa*, which signifies, *to know again*.

R. chap. 2.—note 110.

The legend of the three Kings of Cologne is rather curious, as there is nothing in the New Testament which assigns them higher rank than Magi, wise men or philosophers. The venerable Bede is the first person known to have given any particular account of them, though his description is probably founded on some older and bygone tradition. He says, Melchior the king of Nubia and Arabia was old, and had grey hair with a long beard, and he offered gold to christ, (a rounde apple of gold and thirty gilt pens,)³⁰ in acknowledgement of his sovereignty. Gaspar, the second of the magi, king of Tarse and Egypt, was young and had no beard; and he offered frankincense to our Lord's divinity. Other accounts say that he was a black Ethiop, and offered myrrh. Balthazar, the third king of

29. Rel. Cer. p. 32.

30. Hail. MS. Brit. Mus. 1704.

Godolie and Saba, was of a dark complexion and had a large beard; he offered myrrh to our Saviour's humanity. He then proceeds to describe their dresses; and whatever his authority may have been, they are constantly depicted according to his account in old pictures and popular representations. The star that guided them on their journey, is said to have been as an eagle flying and even beating the air with his wings, and had in it the form and likeness of a young child, with the sign of the cross above him. The nearer they approached to Christ's dwelling, the brighter the star shone; and although their journey lasted for twelve days, yet they felt no fatigue and neither took or required rest or refreshment. Indeed it appeared to them only like a single day's journey. One of the Apocryphal Gospels states, that in return for their offerings, the Lady Mary took one of the swaddling clothes in which our Saviour was wrapped, and gave it to them; which they received as a noble present, and to it great virtues were afterwards attributed. In their old age, the kings were baptized by St. Thomas; and after their death, their bodies were taken to Constantinople by the Empress Helena. From thence they were subsequently removed to Milan; and from thence, in the time of Reinaldus, archbishop of Cologne, to that city, which proved their permanent resting place ³¹. It is highly probable that the tradition respecting Ewerby Wath may have originated from the above legend. On the common near that place are several large coffin stones lying near each other but without any kind of regularity. They have occupied their present situation far beyond the time of human memory or tradition; and the people have a legend still existing in doggerel rhyme, which attributes them to some magical transformation. The lines are as follow.

The Kings of England and France and Spain,
 All fell down in a shower of rain;
 The shower of rain made dirty weather,
 And here they all lie down together.

They probably were brought from the monasteries of Kyme or Haverholm after the Dissolution, and used as foot-bridges, or perhaps a causeway over a swamp before the general drainage of the fens.

S. chap. 2.—note 112.

The apocryphal New Testament mentions the following miracles which attended the Flight into Egypt :—"And now he drew near to a great city

31. Vid. Gents. Mag. vol. 100. p. 318.

in which there was an idol, and, at the same instant, the idol fell down, and at his fall all the inhabitants of Egypt, besides others, ran together. They went hence to the secret place of robbers, who robbed travellers, as they pass by, of their carriages and their clothes, and carry them away bound. These thieves, upon their coming, heard a great noise, such as the noise of a King with a great army and many horse, and the trumpets sounding, as his departure from his own city; at which they were so affrighted as to leave all their booty behind them, and fly away in haste." Maundrel, in his travels, tells us that at Bethlehem were to be seen, in his time, the chapel of the Holy Manger, and a grotto, dug out of a chalky rock, in which the Virgin and her child are said to have secreted themselves from the fury of Herod for some time before their departure into Egypt. The women hereabouts take the earth of this grotto, medicinally, for the increase of their milk, imagining that the whiteness of it proceeds from some drops which fell from the breasts of the Virgin while she was suckling the infant, and not from any natural cause. In some of the Roman Catholic Churches the flight into Egypt was commemorated on the fourteenth of January, by a celebration called "The Feast of the Ass," and a missal for the service was actually composed by the Archbishop of Sens, in the thirteenth century, including hymns which the present age would pronounce to be absolutely profane. The Ass, habited in sacerdotal robes, was conducted, with great solemnity, into the choir, where he was received by the clergy to the music of the organ and the voice of the choiristers. Many indecent ceremonies succeeded, in which the people imitated his braying; and the whole night was spent in drinking and *sotises*.

T. chap. 2.—note 118.

The personal descent of our Saviour into Hell was a point of doctrine which furnished an abundance of machinery to the religious Mysteries. Those acted at Chester were very diffuse on this subject; but the Coventry ritual, which, there is every reason to suppose, was performed at Sleaford, was but short. In the Harleian Collection in the British Museum, 2253, is a MS. containing a full pageant or play of Christ's Descent, which Strutt thinks is as ancient as the reign of Edw. I. The interlocutors are Christ, Satan, Janitor, Adam, Eva, Habraham, David, Johan Baptist, and Moy-ses. It commences with a prologue, thus:—

Alle hearkneth to me now,
A strif wolle y tellen on.

Of Jhesu ant of Sathan;
 Tho Jhesu wes to Helle y gan
 For to vacche thenne his,
 Ant bringen them to Paradys.
 Then ensues a dialogue between Christ and Satan, respecting the proprietary right of the latter to sinning souls; and he is exceedingly indignant at the attempt which the Saviour is now making to deprive him of his legal possessions. It is thus expressed in the Vision of Pierce Ploughman.
 If he reve me of my ryght, he robbeth me by mastrie,
 For by ryght and reson, the reukes that beon here,
 Body and soule beth myne, both good and ille
 For he hymself hit seide. that syre is of hells
 That Adam & Eve. and al hus issue
 Sholden deye with devl. and here dwelle evere
 Yf thei touchede a treo. othr toke ther of an appel
 Thus thees lorde of light such a lawe made
 And sutthe he is so leel a lord. ich leyve thatche wolnat
 Reven us of oure ryght. sutthe reson hem dampned
 And sutthe we han be seosed. sevene thow send wynt.

But to return to our MS. Christ shews that by his Redemption he has destroyed Satan's right, and acquired a victory over the powers of darkness. The gates are then thrown open and each of the interlocutors is introduced as welcoming the arrival of their Saviour, who assures them that he is come to deliver them from prison and bear them to everlasting happiness. In the Auchinleck MS. Advocates Library, W. 4. 1. is a legend "in the shape of a dialogue, probably an edition of the favourite mystery called the *Harrowing of Hell*. It wants beginning and end, and occupies one entire leaf, and a fragment of another.

Dominus ait.

Hard gates have y gon,

And suffred pines mani on.

Thritti winter and thridde half yere

Have y wonde in londe here, &c."³²

This doctrine was founded on Scripture and the writings of the early fathers. The Apostles describe the place wherein wicked men shall be tormented under the notion of a lake of fiery brimstone. They use the same word with the pagans, to denote the state of the souls after death, viz. *Ades*. They say that men descend into it, and that Christ descended

into it. This was enough to make Clemens exclaim "What? was Plato ignorant of the rivers of fire, and the depth of the earth, which the barbarians call *Gehenna*, and which he prophetically named *Tartarus*? He hath mentioned Cocytus, Acheron, Pyriphlegethon, and such like places where wicked men are punished that they may be mended."³³ Clemens also believed, with most of the ancient Fathers,³⁴ that Christ did really descend into hell, and preached there to the damned souls, of which he saved those that would believe in him.³⁵ Ignatius says,³⁶ he descended alone to Hell and threw down the barrier that had existed from the beginning, and brake up the partition wall thereof. To the same effect Origen says, Christ having bound the strong man, and by his cross conquered him, went even to his house, to the house of death and into Hell; and thence took his goods, that is, the souls which he possessed.³⁷ The Fathers uniformly speak the same language.³⁸ St. Cyril assures us, that when Christ was risen he left the devil alone in Hell.³⁹ Prudentius seems to have been in the same mind too; at least in his fifth hymn,⁴⁰ he says that every year on the night in which Christ rose, the damned feel no pain; which supposes that Christ descended into that place, and took the damned out of it on that very night. The following is a free translation of the passage. "On the night in which God came from the lakes of Acheron, the spirits of the wicked experience some diminution of their torments. Tartarus languishes with milder punishments; the people of the shades are free from fire, and glad to have some rest in their prison; and the rivers of brimstone do not boil as usual."

Hell was universally represented by a pair of enormous jaws gaping to devour. Thus, in the "Mirror for Magistrates," it is described as

An hideous hole all vaste, withouten shape,
Of endless depth, orewhelm'd with ragged stone,

With oughly mouthe, and griesley iawes doth gape,

And to our sight confounds itselfe in one.

In a procession which was annually performed at Dunkirk, called the Cow-mass, and described in the Town and Country Magazine for 1789,—
"Hell was represented by an enormous figure something like an elephant, with a large head and eyes, and a pair of horns on which several little

33 Clem. Alex. Strom. p. 592.

34 Ibid. p. 637.

35 Le Clerc in vit. Clem. Alex.

36. Epist. ad Trall.

37 Orig. li 5 ad. Rom. c. 6.

38 Vide Athanas. in pass. et. cruc. Dom.—Epiph. in hœres. Anaceph.—Hieron. in Matt. c. 12.—Zanch. ad Coloss. c. 2.

39 Cyr. Hom. Pasch. 7.

40 Vers. 125 and 133.

devils, or rather boys dressed like devils, were sitting ; the monster was hollow within, and the lower jaws moveable, by moving of which it frequently exhibited the inward contents, which were filled with full grown devils, who poured out liquid fire from the *jaws of hell*. At the same time, the figure was surrounded by a great number of external devils dressed in crape, with hideous masks and curled tails." In agreement with this machinery there is a sculpture on the east end of Dorrington Church which appears intended to represent the Descent into Hell ; and it bears a striking resemblance to Hearne's print of *JESUS CHRISTUS, RESURGENS A MORTUIS SPOLIAT INFERNUM*, republished by Hone in his *Dissertation on the ancient Mysteries*. I have added an etching of this Sculpture, which I consider more satisfactory than the most elaborate description.



A bas relief in the west front of Lincoln Cathedral, in like manner represents Hell by a tremendous mouth from which flames of fire and serpents issue. Two persons appear as entering into it over the body of a third, which lies prostrate. This relief is most probably seven or eight hundred years old.

U. chap. 2.—note 120.

Each trade had its castle or tower. Thus in a general ordinance for the regulation of the Guilds of Beverley made A. D. 1488, it is "or-dayned and statute by the foresayde xij. governors of the assent and consent of the two bynks, and also by assent and consent of all the alder-

men and the bredyn *that be in castele and clothyng* that the aforesayd xij. for tyme being shall go yerely in processyon on Corpus Christi day or on the morn after as it schall happyn afore all the aldermen, and every man of the other two bynks to go with there aldermen of there occupatyon in ther clothyng belonging to ther broderhode, and yf there be any broder of any of the aforesyde crafts that be founde rebell here agyne shall forfeit

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to the commonalty xx wythout any pardon." And in the ordinances of the Guild of minstrels at the same place A.D. 1555. it was agreed on that "if there be any man that is no brother, that taketh a brother's castle from him, he shall pay xij. d. to the gilde. And also it is ordeyned that none shall play in a castle, except he be a brother, upon payn of xij. d. And also that the alderman shall receive of every mynstrell that stands in the castles upon Cross Monday, without he be a brother of the said fraternity, then to pay xij. d. to his contribute, and to the welfare of the said fraternity of our lady of the Read Arke."⁴¹ The author of an entertaining pamphlet called "London Pageants," says, "the Pageants were of two kinds. The most ancient were portable images, like the giants, which could be carried or drawn in procession; others, which from their bulk were necessarily stationary, with scenic edifices, furnished with living performers, generally children. This latter kind appears to have originated from the Towers, which, in the earlier instances were erected round the crosses and conduits that studded the centre of all the wide streets. In the days of Rich. II. and Hen. V, they were filled with musicians and choiristers in the garbs of angels, saints, and prophets; and afterwards were varied into other devices, and explained by speeches and dialogues. These exhibitions resembled very closely the performances of the early stage, which were confined to holy mysteries, or historical dramas, derived from the sacred scriptures, and the legends of the saints; and Moralities, in which the Virtues and other allegorical characters were personified. Like the Pageants, these popular entertainments, before theatres yet existed, were performed on scaffolds in the open street." "It seems certain," says Sir Walter Scott, "that the mummers of England, who used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the Guisards of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland, (*me ipso teste*,) we were wont, during my boy-hood, to take the characters of the apostles, at

⁴¹ See my Hist. of Beverley, p. 370 and 558.

least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours plumb cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes; another was

..... Alexander, king of Macedon,
Who conquer'd all the world but Scotland alone
When he came to Scotland his courage grew cold,

To see a little nation courageous and bold.

These and many such verses were repeated, but by rote and unconnectedly. There was also, I believe, a Saint George. In all there was a confused resemblance of the ancient mysteries, in which the characters of scripture, the Nine Worthies and other popular personages were usually exhibited.⁴²

V. chap. 2.—note 122.

The services to the virgin are thus stated to have acquired a footing in the church. Her seven joys were; 1, her annunciation by the angel; 2, her Visitation by Elizabeth; 3, the glorious Birth of Christ; 4, the Adoration of the Magi; 5, the Retrieve of her Son in the temple; 6, the appearance of Christ after his Resurrection; 7, and her happy departure and Assumption into Heaven. With these joys, says Bernardin de Bustis, "St. Thomas, of Canterbury, a devout servant of the Virgin's, did every day salute our lady. To him she one day appeared when he was at his prayers, and she assured him that his saluting her with her seven joys on earth was very agreeable to her; but that the saluting of her with her seven joys in Heaven, which he did, was acceptable to her in a higher degree. And she promised to him, and to others also who should daily repeat these salutations, adjoining to each an Ave Maria, that she would be present with them at the hour of death; and that for her sake they should be saved."⁴³

And they say, therefore, that upon this account the worship of the virgin is chiefly to be commended, that she is always present with her clients in the agony of death, as a faithful patroness and mother.⁴⁴ A mystery preserved in the British Museum,⁴⁵ contains the following curious passage respecting the honours paid to the Virgin. An angel thus addresses her.

In yo'r name MARIA fyve letteyrs we han;—

M Mayde most mercifull and mekest I mende;

A Auerte of the Anguisch that Adam began;

R Regina of Regyon, reyneynge w't owty ende;

I Innocent be Influens of Jesses', kende;

A Aduocat, most autentyk yo'r Antecer Anna,

⁴² Marmion. can. 6. n. 3.

⁴³ Ten. Idol. p. 245.

⁴⁴ Horst. Par. An. Sect. 7. p. 417.

⁴⁵ Cott. MS. Vesp. D. viii.

Hefne and helle her kneys down bende,

Whan this holy name of you is seyde MARIA.

His osculet terra. Her schal comyn, alwey, an aungel, w't dyvers p'sents goynge, and comyng, and in the tyme thei schal synge in hefne, this hy'pne J'HU CORONA VIRGINII. On one of the priory seals of Bridlington, is a representation of the Saviour in the act of placing a crown on the virgin's head. It is engraved in Prickett's Bridlington, plate xi. Before the office of the Assumption, the Virgin is pictured, in a Missal printed at Paris, ascending into Heaven with a glory about her head; ⁴⁶ and she is called, the Spring and Fountain of Salvation and Life, the Gate of Paradise, the Mother of Light, the Intercessor between God and Man, the Hope of Mankind, the Ocean of the Deity, ⁴⁷ God's beloved daughter, ⁴⁸ the Empress of Seraphims, ⁴⁹ and Queen of Heaven and Earth. ⁵⁰ Her reputed relics were esteemed of infinite value among the monks, and preserved with the most jealous care. "As to her hair," says Picart, "the greatest part of it has been preserved; and for her milk, not one drop of it, we are told, was ever lost; but relics were made of it immediately after our Saviour's nativity. Some of it is to be seen in divers parts of Christendom. Our lady's wedding ring is preserved with the utmost respect at Perouse; the fate and miracles whereof are all described in a book published in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The blessed Virgin's clothes are to be seen at Rome and several other places; her shifts at Chartres and Aix la Chapelle; one of her handkerchiefs at Treves; her girdles at our lady of Montserrat, at Prato, &c.; one of her combs at Rome, another at Bezancon; her shoes at our lady of Puy, and at St. Flour; one of her slippers in Brittany; the measure of her foot is in the custody of the Spaniards, and pope John xxii gave seven hundred years indulgences, and a pretty full remission of sins to the devotee who should thrice kiss the *holy measure*, and say three Ave's in honour of it. It is not to be questioned but that all the various pieces of her goods, kitchen furniture, toilette, and implements of household, have been carefully preserved. Her gloves, headclothes, veils, bed, chair, and the stones on which she washed our Lord's swaddling clothes; her candles, the oil for her lamp, and all her earthen ware, are still exposed to public view. It is true indeed that these things were lost for several ages; but the monks have had the good fortune to find them one after another. We have no relic of her sacred body left us, that being taken up into heaven."

46 Missil. Rom. par. 1660. p. 473.

47 Rel. Cer. p. 155.

48 Horst. Par. Animæ. in Dedic. p. 415.

49 Contemp. of the Life of Holy Mary, A. D. 1685, p. 4.

50 Horst. ut supra. p. 415.

To the service of the Virgin, were added Cow masses, Processions of the Camel, Ass festivals, &c. ; but most to our purpose at present was a curious custom of the middle ages, which is thus described by Mills in his *History of the Crusades*. At Aix in Provence, on the festival of Corpus Christi, the finest Tom cat of the country, was wrapped in swaddling clothes like a child, and exhibited in a magnificent shrine to public admiration. Every knee was bent, every hand strewed flowers or poured incense, and grimalkin was treated in all respects as the god of the day. But on the festival of St. John poor Tom's fate was reversed. A number of the tabby tribe were put into a wicker basket and thrown alive into the midst of an immense fire, kindled in the public square by the bishop and his clergy. Hymns and Anthems were sung, and processions were made by the priests and people in honour of the sacrifice.

W. chap. 2.—note 128.

It is worthy of observation that the patrocinity of a church or town was not an imaginary guardianship, or a sinecure honour, in these early times. The saint was expected and believed to be on the alert for the protection of the people in times of difficulty and distress. This belief is depicted in lively colours by Felix Faber, a monk of Ulma.⁵¹ "A town," says he, "nigh to Ulma, is Seffingen, in which is the blessed Virgin presiding in the garden of virgins, and keeping on the west the walls of that city. On the south is situate the village of Wiblingen, in which St. Martin armed both with the temporal and spiritual militia, is the patron of the church and the guardian of the Ulmenses. Nigh also is Skuvekhofen, an ancient town, where at this day standeth a church in which St. John the Evangelist watcheth over Ulma. On the east is the village of Pful, where standeth the mausoleum of the blessed virgin in the public street. There she demonstrates by certain miracles, that she dwells in that place. Thence she looks upon Ulma with the eyes of mercy and defends it. In that village St. Udibricus is the patron of the church ; an excellent guardian of the citizens who implore his aid, On the north, on the royal mountain of Elchingen is placed a lofty throne of the blessed Virgin, to the terror of all that have evil will at Ulma. He further mentions St. George, St. Leonard, All Saints with the Virgin in the midst of them, St. James and St. Michael as patrons and defenders of that place. And for

⁵¹ *Hist. Suev.* p. 315.

St. Michael, he is placed on a mountain on the west side as a watchman looking over the whole city, and in armour as the protector of it.⁵²

Some of these patron saints were endowed with the most miraculous powers. Thus St. Raymond of Pennaforte having occasion to cross the sea, and the king of Spain having given strict orders that no person should accommodate him with a vessel, threw his cloak into water, and taking his staff in his hand, embarked in this new kind of boat, and arrived safe in Catalonia. St. Peter of Nola had frequent and familiar intercourse with God and the blessed Virgin. The apostle St. Peter one day honoured him with a visit in the same posture wherein he was crucified, that is with his heels upwards. The Liber Festivalis records a curious instance of a similar intercourse with which St. Gilbert was honoured. Once being afflicted with a sore throat, "the Virgin took her feyre pappe and milked on his throat, and went her way, and anon therewith he was hole, and thanked our lady ever after." St. Francis of Paula was endowed with a supernatural strength. "There never was his fellow since Sampson himself. He carried away without any assistance a prodigious large rock, which obstructed the foundation of the dormitory of a monastery he was building; he took upon his shoulders what four men were not able so much as to move. He hung up in the air a piece of rock which had broke from a mountain, and threatened to demolish his new edifice, and dash in pieces a great number of his workmen. He afterwards supported it with his staff, and left it for a long time in that position exposed to public view, to the edification of a multitude of a people, who resorted thither in crowds to see such a miracle. This rock was afterwards made use of in finishing his new monastery." A late tourist in Normandy stopped at Villiers to make a drawing of an ancient capital, representing a saint giving the good works of a deceased person against his evil deeds; and as the former is plainly preponderating, the devil is introduced rectifying the scale with a two pronged fork. The following is the author's account. The Saint, who was afraid of the frauds of the fiend, resolved to hold the balance himself. He began by throwing in a pilgrimage to the virgin; he pulled out an assignation with some fair mortal Madona, who had ceased to be immaculate. The saint laid in the scale the sackcloth and ashes of the penitent in lent. Satan answered the deposit by theizard and leaty robe of a masker at the carnival. Thus did they continue

interchanging the sorrows of godliness with the sweets of sin, till the saint was much distressed by observing that the scale of Satan always seemed the heaviest. Almost did he despair of his client's salvation, when he luckily saw eight little jetty black claws, just hooking and clenching over the rim of the golden bason, which at once betrayed the craft of the cloven foot. Old Nick had put a little cunning young devil under the balance, who kept clinging to the scale, and swaying it down with all his might. The saint sent the imp to his proper place in a moment, and instantly the burden of transgression was seen to kick the beam. Numerous instances of a similar nature may be found in the Golden Legend, Picart's religious Ceremonies, Butler's Lives of the Saints, Cressy's Church History, and other authentic sources.

At the Reformation the pictures and images of saints with which our religious edifices had been profusely adorned, were removed, and their places supplied by Texts of Scripture; many specimens of which still remain in the churches about Sleaford, and particularly at Hale, which is one of the neatest and cleanest churches in that neighbourhood.

X. chap. 2.—note 132.

Rowston church is dedicated to St. Clement, and one of the baptized bells still bears his name. He is depicted with a triple crown because he has the reputation of being esteemed by the Romish writers, as a pope; and the anchor was made his symbol, because he is said to have been thrown into the sea with an anchor about his neck; and Ribadeineira asserts that when his disciples searched for his body, the sea became dry for the space of three miles from the shore; and there they found a small church which had been constructed by Angels; within the church was a stone coffin, and within the coffin the body of Clement and the anchor lying beside him.

The village of Rowston was anciently famous for a Holy Well which performed many miraculous cures. The traditions respecting it are almost lost; and it has been by the most minute and indefatigable inquiries that I have been able to elicit the facts contained in this note. The well itself is an ordinary spring, now choked up, although it has been of sufficient importance to have its permanency provided for by being surrounded with a wall of stone and other appendages. It is situated in some low grounds to the north west of the church, and is traditionally said to have been used in times beyond memory for its medicinal properties, and was much

frequented by persons afflicted with the scrofula and other complaints; which are said to have been uniformly relieved, if the water was applied at the proper time of the moon, for then the spirit of the well was most propitious. What that sanative period was, the tradition does not say, but it was doubtless in the first quarter, as is explained by a reference to the druidical ceremony of the deiseal, or processional movement from east to west by the south, a custom which is still used in passing the bottle at our convivial parties, and to this the observances at Rowston Holy Well may be safely ascribed. It is evident that the virtue of the water was merely imaginary, for had it been an actual mineral spring of undoubted efficacy in the cure of these diseases, it would scarcely have been suffered to fall to decay. From the water of these consecrated wells the druids used to vaticinate respecting the recovery of invalids, who were instructed to believe that the cure was effected by the agency of a guardian spirit residing in the well; who in the present case was probably *Rous* or *Rewys*, a name of the principal female deity of ancient British mythology, from whom the village derived its name; the termination, *ton*, being Saxon. The druid took up the water under the influence of a six-day's moon, pronouncing the name of the sick person, and from the turn which it took in the cup his fate was prognosticated. "The issue seldom failed of gaining the well additional credit; for the hopes or fears of the patient, with the care or neglect of his attendants were generally sufficient to verify the prediction, by which they were always influenced. This was more especially the case when the water had taken the *tual turn*, as the fears of men are generally more prepollent than their hopes, when their fate hangs in a doubtful scale."⁵³ The custom of well worship was very prevalent amongst our Saxon predecessors after their conversion; and it ultimately arrived at such a height that laws were made to restrain it within proper bounds. It is wonderful how potent these Holy Wells were considered amongst our northern neighbours; and with what difficulty the superstitious belief in their efficacy was ultimately suppressed. A correspondent to Hone's Every Day Book says, "among other superstitious observances for which May is reckoned favourable, there is a custom of visiting certain wells, which were believed to possess a charm for curing of sick people during that month. In 1628, a number of persons were brought before the Kirk Session of Falkirk, accused of going to Christ's Well on the Sundays of May, to seek their health; and the whole being found guilty, were sentenced to repent "in linens" three several sabbaths.

⁵³ Smith. Gal. Ant. p. 38.

“And it is statute and ordained that if any person or persons be found superstitiously and idolatrously, after this, to have passed in pilgrimage to Christ's well on the sundays of May to seek their health, they shall repent *in sacco* (sackcloth) and linen three several sabbaths, and pay twenty lib. (Scots) *toties quoties*, for ilk fault; and if they cannot pay it, the baillies shall be recommended to put them in ward, and to be fed on bread and water for aught days.”⁵⁴ They were obliged for the preservation of the charm, to keep strict silence on the way, to and from the well, and not to allow the vessel in which the water was to touch the ground. In 1657 a mob of parishioners were summoned to the session, for believing in the powers of the well of Airth, a village of about 6 miles north of Falkirk, on the banks of the Forth, and the whole were sentenced to be publicly rebuked for the sin. Yet within these few years, a farmer and his servant were known to travel fifty miles for the purpose of bringing water from a charmed well to cure their sick cattle.” And there are some springs, with which I am acquainted, in Lincolnshire, bursting from under church yards, that are still considered hallowed and beneficial in the cure of certain diseases.

Y. chap. 2.—note 134.

Guthlac was an eminent Lincolnshire saint, and the son of a Mercian Nobleman named Perwald, as we are informed by Ingulphus. Having formed the resolution of abandoning the military life to which he had been bred, and renouncing the world, “by divine guidance he came in a boat to one of those solitary desert islands called Crulande on St. Bartholomew's day, and in a hollow on the side of a heap of turf, built himself a hut in the days of Cenred, king of Mercia, when the Britons gave their inveterate enemies the Saxons, all the trouble they could.” One great and cogent reason why this solitary place had hitherto remained uninhabited was now revealed. The floods and wastes were haunted with spirits and demons of monstrous size and shape, which kept all human beings at an unapproachable distance; and even the sanctity of Guthlac and his pious followers was scarcely proof against their infernal attacks. Some idea of the formidable nature of these impudent devils may be gathered from Camden, who reciting an ancient author,⁵⁵ describes them as being of hideous form, and varied in character as the goblin builders of Dirrington. One of these sturdy fiends had the audacity to

⁵⁴ Session Records, June 12, 1628.

⁵⁵ Felix. de vit. Guthlac.

tempt Becelin, the clerk of Guthlac, to murder his master ; but he was unsuccessful, and fled howling with disappointment. Notwithstanding the annoyance of these supernatural intruders, Guthlac maintained his situation at Croyland, and dying, was buried at Anchorchurch house; leaving behind him a reputation for sanctity which attracted many pilgrims to his tomb ; and laid the foundation for an influential monastery, which received its first charter from the hands of Ethelbald, king of Mercia, A. D. 716, by which it was endowed with all the land for many miles round. It was dedicated to the honour of God, the Blessed Virgin, St. Bartholomew and St. Guthlac. In the west front of the ruins of this monastery which contains many statues we find St. Guthlac standing in all the odour of sanctity, and distinguished by the scourge of discipline and the knife. In the recess of the door way is an expanded quatrefoil of reliefs, which I examined in the year 1829, and found it to contain a series of remarkable circumstances in the life of this saint. First we have a boat in which are three persons, St. Guthlac with his sister Pega and his companion Tatwin, represented as coming first to Croyland, a place at that time the resort of wild boars and other ravenous beasts ; to convey which idea the sculptor has introduced a tree, with a wild sow and a litter of pigs. The next design pictures St. Guthlac seated with a loaf of bread at his feet and a flagon of water behind him ; while some person approaches in a supplicating posture, supposed to be Ethelbald, who visited the saint and was relieved in his distress ; but it more probably alludes to the famous bottle miracle described on page 31 of Felix's Life of Guthlac. Another compartment contains a view of the saint on his death bed, attended probably by his confessor, and comforted by an angel ; and the fourth shews his corpse conveyed to heaven by angels, and received by the deity. In the centre is the figure of a man tempted by a monstrous demon, supposed to refer to some one of the many trials which so sorely perplexed St. Guthlac on his first arrival upon the island of Croyland.

At this place an ancient custom prevailed until the time of Edw. IV. to give small knives to all comers on St Bartholemew's day in allusion to the knife wherewith that Saint was flead. Many of these knives of various sizes have been found amongst the ruins of the abbey and in the river. The abbey arms were, Quarterly

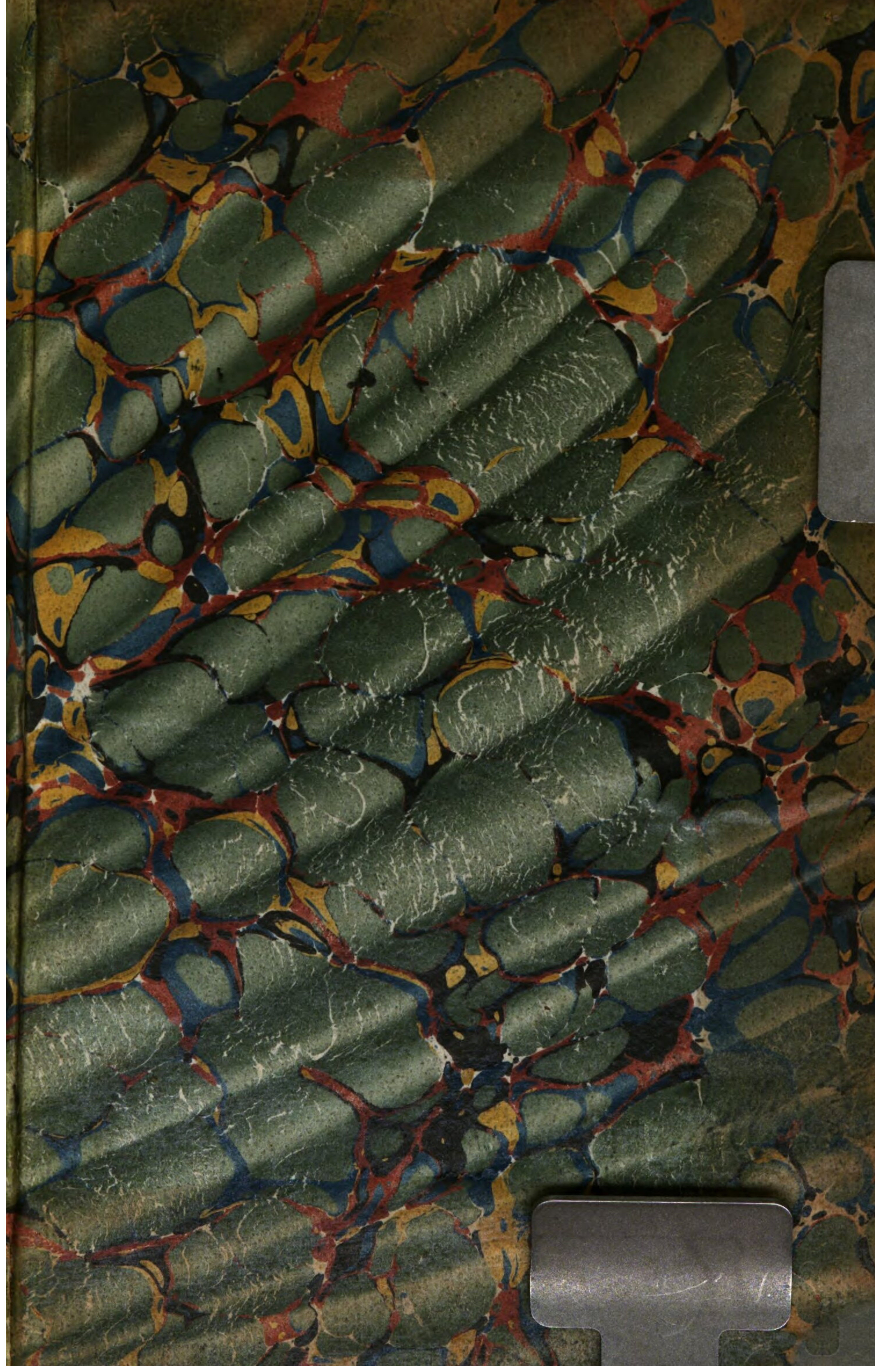
1 and 4. Gu. 3 knives erect in fess ar.
their handles or.

2 and 3. Three scourges erect in fess or.
with three lashes to each,

in reference to the whip of St. Guthlac so celebrated for the virtue of its flagellations; And the church of Fishtoft, near Boston, in this county, which is dedicated to St. Guthlac, has in the tower a canopied niche with a statue of the saint bearing a scourge. Thompson in his history of Boston, has preserved a curious tradition about this statue, on the authority of Ireland; which is, that as long as the whip remained in its hand, the parish of Fishtoft should not be infested with rats and mice. Dr. Fuller gave credence to this vulgar prejudice, and asserted it really to be the case; and that if a house or barn was built partly in Fishtoft, and partly in an adjoining parish, the rats and mice would never enter that part which was in Fishtoft, though the other end might swarm with them. A local token in my possession bears the above arms, with this inscription, **POORES HALFEPENY OF CROYLAND. 1670.**

Z. chap. 2.—note 146.
People of all ranks, at Sleaford, were so fond of these amusements that their abolition by Hen. VIII. produced numerous disorders and insurrections in the neighbourhood, which ended in the death of Lord Hussey and others, as appears from the following extract from Baker's Chronicle :—*"In the ninth of June, 1537, the bishops and all the clergy had a solemn convocation at St. Paul's Church, in London; where, after much disputation and debating of matters, they published a book of religion, intituled, Articles devised by the King's Highness; in which book are specially mentioned but three Sacraments; viz.—Baptism, Eucharist, and Penance; also certain injunctions were set forth, whereby many of the old Holidays were abrogated, specially those that fell in harvest time."* This innovation, added to the alteration of the service, which was ordered to be performed in English, "so stirred up the people, that in Lincolnshire they assembled to the number of twenty thousand," bearing many of the pageant banners as stimulants to excite the people to join them. This first insurrection was quelled by the King in person; but the second was fatal to the principal leaders. "Lord Darcy was beheaded on the Tower hill; the Lord Hussey at Lincoln; Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains at Hull; Sir John Bulmer's paramour was burnt in Smithfield, and most of the others were executed at Tyburn. *Tanta molis erat,*" adds Baker, "so great a matter it was, to make the Realm be quiet, in so great innovations of religion."





Oliver, George,

History of the holy trinity guild, at Sleaford with an account of its
miracle plays, religious mysteries and shows, as practised in the
fifteenth century ... ; To which is added an appendix ... ; The whole
illustrated by copious notes, critical, historical and explanatory

Lincoln 1837

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